

**FIRST LOOK: SONY RX100
MK III WITH POP-UP EVF**



**NEW NIKON CSC
TO ARRIVE IN JUNE**

Saturday 31 May 2014

amateur photographer

THE WORLD'S NO.1 WEEKLY PHOTO MAGAZINE

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ON TEST

PAGE 45

CANON G1 X MARK II

We put Canon's top-of-the-range PowerShot camera to the test

AP GUIDE



PAGE 21

INCREDIBLE INFRARED

Follow our step-by-step guide to taking these striking images

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

PAGE 33

THE PERFECT LIGHT

How Rupert Vandervell uses contrast for his street photos

ANIMAL MAGIC

Your best animal images in print, as we reveal the winners in the latest round of APOY 2014



PAGE 26

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Contents

Amateur Photographer For everyone who loves photography

WHEN I was learning to print in the darkroom, I was fortunate enough to spend some of my time trying to print in colour. I say 'trying', as in total darkness, with only a kettle to help keep the expensive chemicals at the right temperature, the results were somewhat hit and miss. I quickly gave up on colour printing and didn't take it up again until I was at university, when I used automated developing processors.

I guess my initial experience was similar to that of Rupert Vandervell (see page 33). He shunned the complexity of colour darkroom printing, but even with the simplicity of digital imaging he still shoots only in black & white. The power of his

stunning street photographs comes from the dramatic contrast between highlight and shadow – they would lose their haunting quality if they were shown in colour.

We can all learn something from just concentrating on looking at highlights and shadows. This week, why not shoot solely in black & white and see what difference it makes to your photography? Then send us a selection of your images to show us how you got on.



Richard Sibley
Deputy editor

NEWS, VIEWS & REVIEWS

5 NEWS

Innocent photographer in shock over deletion of picture; June debut for Nikon 1 S2; Canon unwraps new wideangle zooms; Pentax 645D price slashed 50% in four years; Jessops launches motorsport courses; Calumet reopens US stores

11 REVIEW

The latest books, exhibitions and websites

44 MASTERING DSLR VIDEO

Take part in our one-day DSLR video tuition seminar at Pinewood Studios with leading film-maker Victoria Grech, in association with Tiffen

90 THE FINAL FRAME

Time is the basis of all value, says Roger Hicks, and we should spend it wisely, whether in photography or in life

TECHNIQUE

16 PHOTO INSIGHT

Photographer and mountaineer Doug Kofsky discusses his epic image of the Baltoro Glacier in Pakistan and the advances in camera technology that have made his images more easily achieved

TESTS & TECHNICAL

6 SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-RX100 MARK III

Michael Topham takes a first look at Sony's Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 Mark III – the first premium compact camera to feature a pop-up electronic viewfinder

P45

We test Canon's PowerShot G1 X Mark II premium compact camera



21 AP GUIDE TO... SHOOTING INFRARED LANDSCAPES

Infrared doesn't have to be daunting. Phil Hall reveals how to take striking infrared landscape images

43 TESTBENCH

Eyelead Sensor Gel Stick and Be-ez LA Robe graphite bag

45 CANON POWERSHOT G1 X MARK II

Canon's latest premium compact sets its sights on improving where the PowerShot G1 X left off. Michael Topham finds out whether the new model is a significantly better camera

53 SAMSUNG NX MINI

Meet the world's smallest and lightest interchangeable-lens camera, the 20.5-million-pixel NX mini. Jon Devo takes a look

56 INTERFIT EX400 Ti 2-LIGHT SOFTBOX KIT

Andrew Sydenham tests Interfit's most powerful offering from the well-established EX budget range of flash heads

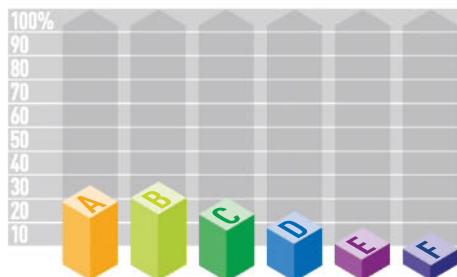
59 GITZO MOUNTAINEER GT1542

Launched back in the 1990s, Gitzo's carbon-fibre Mountaineer range of tripods still have a reputation for excellence. Now they have been given an overhaul, as Callum McInerney-Riley explains

THE AP READERS' POLL

IN AP 10 MAY WE ASKED...

When you buy new camera gear, do you prefer to shop on the high street or online?



YOU ANSWERED...

A On the high street – I prefer dealing face to face	25%
B Online – it's more convenient and/or cheaper	27%
C It depends on the price of the item	20%
D I look online but buy on the high street	14%
E I look on the high street but buy online	8%
F None of the above	6%

THIS WEEK WE ASK... How do you create black & white images?

VOTE ONLINE www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

60 ASK AP

Our experts answer your questions

YOUR WORDS & PICTURES

14 LETTERS

AP readers speak out on the week's issues

15 BACKCHAT

AP reader Dave Mason takes a lighthearted look at the lengths people go to in their quest to upgrade their camera

26 APOY RESULTS ROUND 2

We reveal the top 30 photographs in our Animal Planet round of Amateur Photographer of the Year

38 APPRAISAL

Damien Demolder examines your images, offering words of wisdom and constructive advice

FEATURES

33 SPIRIT OF THE STREET

Fine-art photographer Rupert Vandervell discusses the themes behind his personal and haunting take on street photography and explains how the right camera helped him realise his vision. Oliver Atwell reports



P33

HOW TO HAVE YOUR PICTURES PUBLISHED IN READER SPOTLIGHT Send in a selection of up to ten images. They can be either a selection of different images or all have the same theme. Digital files sent on CD should be saved in a Photoshop-compatible format, such as JPEG or TIFF, with a contact sheet and submission form. Visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/spotlight for details. We cannot publish images without the necessary technical details. Each RGB image should be a minimum of 2480 pixels along its longest length. Transparencies and prints are also accepted. We recommend that transparencies are sent without glass mounts and posted via Special Delivery. For transparencies, prints or discs to be returned you must include an SAE with sufficient postage.

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APNews

News | Analysis | Comment 31/5/14



Just when you thought a pocket compact couldn't get any better

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 III, page 6

Shopping centre pics spark complaint • Security staff alert police

INNOCENT PHOTOGRAPHER IN SHOCK OVER PIC DELETION



Committed to defending your photographic rights!

AN 80-year-old photography enthusiast has told of his shock after police urged him to delete an image of a child playing on a bungee trampoline inside a shopping centre.

Mike O'Regan (pictured) had been taking pictures while waiting for his wife inside the Westfield Centre in Derby on Easter Saturday (19 April).

A woman identifying herself as the boy's mother complained to the mall's security guards, who alerted police.

O'Regan told AP: 'I used my [Samsung Galaxy S4] phone to take a shot of an ingenious bungee/trampoline device for children.'

'I took three shots in quick succession, all showing the complete trampoline apparatus, and the same small boy strapped into it.'

'It then transpired that a lady had complained to two security guards that I had taken a shot of her son.'

A Derbyshire Police spokeswoman told AP that O'Regan – who says the boy was fully clothed – agreed to delete the photo when asked by officers, although he had not broken any laws.

O'Regan says guards prevented him from leaving the scene until police officers arrived, but did not explain why he had been stopped.

'I was not physically touched by the security guards, but when I made a move to find my wife (who was in M&S) they moved in to block my way.'

O'Regan said two police officers arrived around 30 minutes later, took down his name and address and insisted he erase the 'offending' shot from his phone.

In the end, he erased all three. 'I found this episode both upsetting and embarrassing,' said O'Regan, who lives in Toton, Nottinghamshire, and has been a keen photo enthusiast for more than 60 years.

The attitude of all those involved was not what an 80-year-old should have



Police took no action against O'Regan, who said security guards had detained him

to endure.'

O'Regan added: 'I was so shocked that I didn't think to take any badge numbers of either the security guards or policewomen.'

A spokeswoman for the mall, which has since become part of property group Intu, told AP there are signs at entrances about photography.

O'Regan does not recall seeing any notices.

In a statement, Intu Derby added: 'Staff acted according

to Westfield's policies, who were the owner and manager at the time.

'Child protection is, of course, our number-one priority, but we also support families' right to take photographs of their loved ones and our photography and filming policies reflect this.'

'We are currently training all our staff at the centre on Intu's policies and procedures, including those around photography.'

Derbyshire Police said in a statement: 'A complaint had been made to security staff regarding a man taking photographs inside the centre.'

'Officers attended and spoke to the man and asked him to delete one of several images he had taken. This was done on the request of a woman whose son appeared in the picture.'

'The man deleted the image as requested. No offences took place.'

The force says it works closely with the centre's staff and security personnel to 'ensure the safety of the centre and its customers'.

SNAP SHOTS

• Sony camera sales fell by a third in the year to 31 March 2014. Combined sales of compact system, compacts and lens-style cameras dropped by 32.3% to 11.5 million. Sony partly blamed the decline on a 'significant' fall in unit sales of compacts. Sony expects demand to decrease to 8 million in the next year. Overall sales revenue at Sony's Imaging Products & Solutions division fell 2% to 741.2m yen.

• Olympus has tweaked its Pen E-P5 CSC and Stylus 1 compact camera via new firmware upgrades. Claimed improvements of E-P5 firmware version 1.4 and Stylus 1 firmware 1.1 include improved remote control functionality when using the Olympus Image Share app. For full details, and to download, visit www.olympus.co.uk.

JUNE DEBUT PLANNED FOR NIKON 1 S2 CSC



NIKON UK has confirmed that its new Nikon 1 S2 compact system camera will be out in June.

The S2 carries a 14.2-million-pixel imaging sensor, 135 AF points (including 73 phase-detection points) and sensitivity ranging from ISO 200 to 12,800.

It will be out in a kit with an 11-27.5mm lens, priced £379.99, while an outfit that adds a 30-110mm zoom will cost £529.99.

Nikon claims that the camera is ideal for people wanting to make the step up from smartphones and compact cameras.

The S2 incorporates an Expeed 4A dual-engine image processor and boasts a 20-frames-per-second burst rate, for up to ten raw images.

It will be available in a choice of black, red, white and yellow.



Do you have a story?

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amateurphotographer@ipcmmedia.com

16-35mm and 10-18mm

CANON UNWRAPS NEW WIDEANGLE ZOOM LENSES

CANON has unveiled a pair of wideangle zoom lenses in the shape of the EF 16-35mm f/4L IS USM and EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM.

Aimed at professionals and enthusiasts, the 16-35mm zoom is Canon's first 'ultra-wide' L-series lens to include optical Image Stabilizer (IS) technology (offering a 4-stop advantage over non-IS lenses).

It features a nine-blade circular aperture and boasts a water and dust-resistant build.

The 'compact and lightweight' EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM is designed for DSLRs with an APS-C



sized imaging sensor.

The 10-18mm lens is due out this month priced £299.99, while the 16-35mm zoom is expected to cost £1,199.99 when it is released in June.



PENTAX 645D SLASHED 50% IN FOUR YEARS

THE PRICE of the Pentax 645D medium-format camera has dropped to less than half what it was when launched in the UK under four years ago.

The 645D (pictured below) has fallen from £8,999.99 to £4,249.99, body only –

a reduction of £4,750.

Pentax had already cut the price to £6,299.99 in October 2012.

The price 'repositioning' is one of several announced by Pentax camera maker Ricoh Imaging, which includes the K-3 (now £949.99), the K-50 (now £499.99) and Q7 (now £339.99).

Ricoh has also cut the price of 15 Pentax lenses, including the 'weather-resistant' DFA

100mm f/2.8 macro, which is now £549.99.

For full details, visit www.shop-uk.ricoh-imaging.eu.



AP hands-on

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 Mark III

Just when you thought a pocket compact couldn't get any better, Sony unveils the RX100 III. **Michael Topham** reports

THERE'S been a lot of talk in the past two years about the future of the compact camera, and more so about the direction they'll take given the ever-evolving nature of smartphones. Never one for resting on its laurels, Sony understood that to ensure the compact camera had a future it had to improve significantly for the better – something the manufacturer successfully achieved in 2012 by launching the RX100.

At the time of its launch, the RX100 was revolutionary in the way it managed to squeeze a 1in sensor inside a tough, travel-friendly aluminium body. With a sensor approximately 4x larger than conventional 1/2.3in-type versions found in traditional point-and-shoot compacts, the RX100 quickly became the compact to own for those who wanted to resolve the highest level of detail from a pocket camera.

Ever since, Sony has been working hard to develop the RX100 to ensure it stays one step ahead of its competition, and 12 months later, the Mark II version arrived. Improvements included a back-illuminated Exmor R CMOS sensor that was claimed to be 40% more sensitive to light, a tiltable 3in WhiteMagic LCD screen that improved on the fixed variety found on its predecessor, and the addition of a multi-interface shoe, which opened up the opportunity to attach an external flash, electronic viewfinder or stereo microphone.

In addition to these new features, the RX100 II introduced Wi-Fi/NFC connectivity and the option to shoot HD video at 24p for cinematically styled movies. Another year on, and Sony has gone one better by releasing the third member in the RX100 series – the RX100 III.

FEATURES

After consulting consumers about the experience and expectations from the RX100 II, Sony looked to improve its RX100 III premium compact in three key areas. While the 1in, 20.1-million-pixel



With a flick of a switch at the side of the body, the RX100 III's electronic viewfinder pops up ready to be used



Exmor sensor is essentially the same as that found in the RX100 II, it is now partnered with Sony's latest and most powerful Bionz X image processor, which has already seen use in other recent cameras such as the Sony Alpha 77 II. Claimed to operate 3x faster than the previous Bionz engine, the RX100 III maintains a maximum sensitivity of ISO 25,600 and is capable of shooting at up to 10fps in its speed priority continuous shooting mode.

The biggest change of all is found in front of the sensor, with the RX100 III's lens better suited to those who would like to squeeze more into the frame. Equivalent to 24-70mm, the lens doesn't extend as far as its predecessor at the long end, although it is a brighter optic that permits an aperture of f/2.8 to be used at full telephoto. Added to this, the improved focusing distance of the lens sees it capable of focusing up to 30cm from a subject at the long end of the zoom. The improved light-gathering capabilities of the lens also allow faster shutter speeds to be used to freeze fast-moving subjects, while the addition of a built-in ND filter gives users the option to use slower shutter speeds in bright lighting conditions.

Another area Sony has looked to improve in the RX100 III is its viewfinder. Those familiar with the RX100 II will remember the optional, and very expensive (£309), EV1MK electronic viewfinder that was designed to clip onto the camera via the hotshoe and connect via the accessory port. The accessory port and hotshoe have both been removed from the RX100 III and in its place is a pop-up flash that's raised using a small switch above the screen.

Instead of clipping a viewfinder onto the body, Sony has produced the first-ever premium compact with a pop-up EVF. This rises ingeniously from the corner of



AT A GLANCE

- 20.1-million-pixel 1in Exmor CMOS sensor
- Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T* 24-70mm f/1.8-2.8
- Bionz X image-processing engine
- ISO 80-25,600
- Retractable OLED Tru-Finder
- 5-axis image stabilisation
- 3in, 1.23-million-dot, tilt-angle LCD
- Price to be announced



Left: Other than the pop-up EVF and pop-up flash, the design of the RX100 III is much the same as its predecessor

the body, helping to keep the camera as streamlined as possible. It features 1.44 million dots and uses a Zeiss T coating to reduce reflections and deliver excellent edge-to-edge clarity. Impressively, it can also be used to power up the camera as an alternative to using the on/off button.

Other improvements to note on the RX100 III include the option to record full HD video footage at up to 50Mbps, or up to 100fps in the XAVC S format. Dual video recording will also be appreciated by those who would like to record high-quality AVCHD/XAVC S footage alongside a smaller MP4 format file that's easier to share. To help ensure steadier movies are created, the RX100 III also features a 5-axis stabilisation system – a first on the RX100 series.

Working out at just 9g heavier than the RX100 II, the RX100 III also features a 3in Xtra Fine LCD that flips by 180° and down by 45°. It is perhaps no surprise to find that Wi-Fi and NFC connectivity have also carried over, and with the support of Sony's PlayMemories app, there's the option to enhance the camera's functionality by using a selection of free or paid-for creative effects and filters.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Although the shape and design of the RX100 III are very similar to the earlier models in the RX100 series, the removal of the multi-interface shoe makes it look a little more like the original RX100 than the RX100 II. In the hand, the RX100 III feels every bit the same as the RX100 II, and for those who purchased an RX100 but didn't feel there was enough on the RX100 II to justify an upgrade, the RX100 III is a tempting proposition for its in-built electronic viewfinder alone.

The way Sony has engineered the 1.44-million-dot OLED Tru-Finder into the body is a great technological achievement considering how small the camera is.

Above: The RX100 III's brighter lens allows a maximum aperture of f/2.8 to be used at the long end of the zoom

Flicking the EVF switch pops up the viewfinder much like a pop-up flash, the only difference being that you're required to pull the EVF towards you slightly before it can be used. I didn't find this to be a problem, though, and the eye sensor performed responsively – just as we've come to expect from Sony's electronic viewfinders. Up to the eye, the viewfinder offers a clear, bright view with good clarity. The resolution sadly doesn't match that of the clip-on viewfinder as offered for the RX100 II, but it'll be more than good enough for most users.

Benefiting from Sony's new Bionz X processor, the camera's autofocus and lock-on speed seemed just as snappy as that of the RX100 II, locking onto subjects with minimal fuss, even in fairly low-light conditions. Some users will appreciate the improved customisation control, and the customisation that's been added to the control ring is an advantage over the previous model. Anyone coming to the RX100 III from a previous version will be able to pick it up and use it from the word go – very little has changed in the menu other than a few new additions.

Overall, it's an improvement on an already excellent premium compact. The RX100 II picked up numerous accolades and there's no reason to say the RX100 III will be any different. Now with an in-built EVF, it offers the perfect blend of what users want from a premium compact camera. The only question is, how much will consumers have to pay to get their hands on it? Pricing information was unavailable at the time of writing, but based on the launch price of the RX100 II and the benefit of having a new EVF built in, I'm guessing that the price of the RX100 III won't be a million miles away from a four-figure sum. The good news, however, is that anyone looking at the RX100 or RX100 II can expect the price of both to fall in the coming months. **AP**



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JESSOPS LAUNCHES MOTORSPORT COURSES

JESSOPS has announced the dates for a series of photography courses for motorsports enthusiasts.

The next Jessops Academy Motorsport Photography Experience will take place on 21 June at Snetterton in Norfolk.

Sessions are also planned at Brand's Hatch, Kent, on 29 August and at Donington Park, Derbyshire, on 13 September.

Hosted by Volkswagen Racing UK, the £199 course promises a 'behind the garage doors'

experience, plus the chance to meet competitors taking part in the Milltek Sport Volkswagen Racing Cup.

Areas covered will include focusing methods and effective panning. Participants are advised to bring a DSLR, a telephoto lens, spare battery and a monopod.

The courses run from 8.30am-3.30pm.

For details call 0844 800 4444 or visit www.jessops.com/academy.



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CALUMET REOPENS US STORES

CALUMET has reopened the first of its US stores since being rescued by C&A Marketing, the licensee of Polaroid instant digital cameras. The store is the Oak Brook shop, which is around a 30-mile drive from Calumet's Chicago base and one of the newer locations.

C&A recently bought Calumet Photographic, a 75-year-old chain that was forced into bankruptcy in March, closing its 14 US stores.

C&A, which is based in New Jersey, said the reopened shop employs 'core staff'.

In a statement, the firm added: 'For 75 years, Calumet defined "photo retailing to professionals" and C&A is determined to rebuild the brand as quickly and efficiently as possible.'

The statement added: 'C&A will make further reopening announcements shortly.' However, it is not clear what other Calumet stores are due to reopen.

In March, Calumet UK said the closure of the US stores would have 'no direct impact' on the UK, where it runs nine shops.

Calumet said its European operations are financially and operationally independent.

SNAP SHOTS

● Amateurs and professionals are urged to enter the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize, which offers £12,000 to the winner. The deadline for entry to the competition is 7 July 2014. An exhibition will open at the National Portrait Gallery in November. For full details visit www.npg.org.uk/photoprize.

● Dozens of photographers are due to be laid off at one of Australia's biggest publishers, Fairfax Media Ltd, which publishes newspapers including *The Sydney Morning Herald*, plans to reduce its photographic team from 50 to 20, reported news agency Reuters. Staff threatened to go on strike over the cost cuts, which will also affect journalists.

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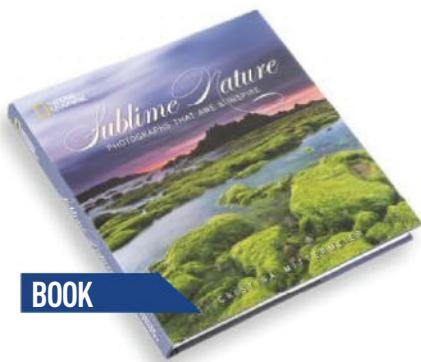


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BOOK

APReview

The latest photography books, exhibitions and websites. By Jon Stapley



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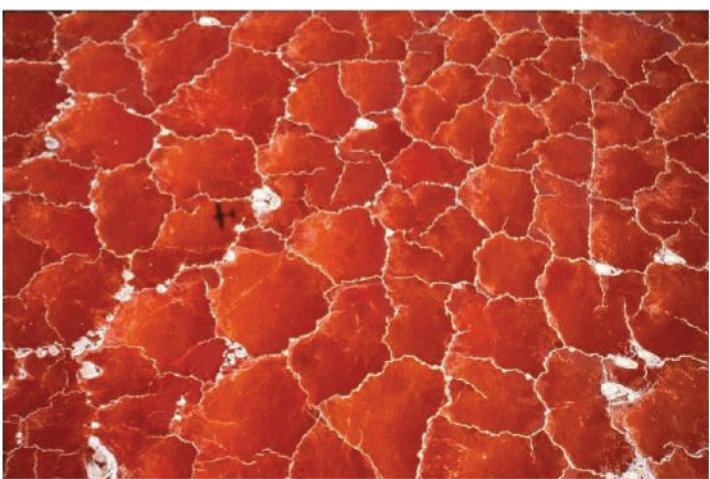
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Sublime Nature: Photographs that Awe & Inspire

By Cristina Mittermeier
National Geographic, £27.50, hardback,
224 pages, ISBN 978-1-42621-301-4

WHAT'S left to say about National Geographic? It's a name that has basically become a kind of shorthand form of 'peerlessly good photography'. Cristina Mittermeier's collection of images from National Geographic is titled *Sublime Nature*, and is just that. The beauty of the subjects is at times overwhelming, but it's the skill

of the photographers that's often most on show here. Sit back and appreciate the intrepidity of Frans Lanting, the compositional skill of Art Wolfe and the painterly wisdom of Jim Brandenburg. I have to make a personal special mention for David Doubilet's 'half-in, half-out' underwater images (see top right), which are absolute triumphs of composition and timing. When you view these, it won't be the last time the book will make you say, 'How did he do that?', but it'll probably be the loudest. Honestly, it's hard not to just keep gushing – Paul Nicklen's Arctic and underwater images (top left and above

left) are well worth a mention, and the awe-inspiring landscapes of Carsten Peter and George Steinmetz display not only the beauty of nature, but also its power.

It's hard not to read the book with a little melancholy, though. As the scientific community's warnings grow increasingly dire, you can't help but wonder if you're going to have to explain to your children and grandchildren why the amazing things these exceptional photographers captured no longer exist. Still, it's a really cool book to have on your coffee table.





EXHIBITION

Double Exposure Portraits

7-22 June. Zebra One Gallery, 1 Perrin's Court, Hampstead, London NW3 1QX. Tel: 0207 794 1281. Website: www.zebraonegallery.com. Open Tue-Sun 11am-4pm. Admission free

THE DOUBLE Exposure Portraits exhibition is the culmination of a ten-month project by YOUYOU Mentoring that brings together the work of four aspiring photographers from London and Essex. Mohamed Abdi (18), Marina Tilahun (20), Susannah Alltimes (20) and Chloe Thacker (21) were mentored by professional

photographers and the fruits of their labours are displayed in a series of celebrity portraits, including *Game of Thrones* star Maisie Williams (above) and Spandau Ballet's Martin Kemp, whose daughter Harley Moon Kemp is one of the mentors. It's fantastic to see a project like this giving young photographers a start in an ever more difficult industry.

www.photographyblogger.net

WEBSITE

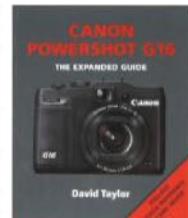


AS A SOURCE of inspiration, this site is slick, readable and easy to lose yourself in. Posts come generally twice a day, and offer bite-sized chunks on various subjects. There are some good tips on getting the most out of your gear, as well as short interviews and galleries that throw the spotlight on individual photographers. None of it is terribly complicated, nor does it give of the impression of taking all that much time or effort to pull together, but it's eminently consumable.



CONDENSED READING

A round-up of the latest photography books on the market



● **CANON POWERSHOT G16: THE EXPANDED GUIDE** by David Taylor, £14.99

The Canon PowerShot G16 is one of the best premium compacts around and it has plenty of nice features – good Wi-Fi with geotagging, excellent image quality and a lovely fast f/1.8-2.8 lens. It is an easy camera to get to know, so you may well be able to survive without a strategy guide, but if you do need a helping hand David Taylor is, as ever, here to help.



● **NEW YORK** by Ron Galella, £34

The godfather of modern paparazzi gets a book to himself, and if you don't find that thought off-putting then you may enjoy this collection. Most of the book consists of famous faces squint in the glare of popping flash. There is artistry, I suppose, in photographing people who clearly don't want to be photographed. Ron himself is a character. At one point he recounts a story of sneaking past airport security to pap Brooke Shields and John Travolta, and uses this anecdote to liken himself to Cartier-Bresson. Hmm.



● **PIKIN SLEE** by Viviane Sassen, £30 Viviane Sassen takes a detour from the fashion work for which she's known to focus on inhabitants of a village on the Upper Suriname River on the coast of South America. The village is inhabited by the descendants of people who escaped slavery under the Dutch. There's a lot of focus on the significance of objects, seemingly humdrum things that nevertheless form integral parts of these people's lives. There's beauty in the everyday, to paraphrase Sassen herself.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

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MEMORIES OF 126

Does anyone remember those little SupaSnaps Snappit cameras from the 1990s that used 126 cartridges and produced square photographs? Mine was a bright pink one that came with stickers and was the first camera I ever owned when I was a kid. My gramps used give me tips on how to get the best pictures. Looking back through some of my dark and blurry photos, it seems I didn't take much heed of his advice. One time, I used up an entire film by taking pictures of pigeons in Warrington town centre in Cheshire. When I got the pictures developed, my mum confiscated my camera for a month for wasting her money.

I still have that camera under my bed. The stickers are hanging off, but I bet it would still work. It's a shame they don't make 126 films any more, as it would be fun to use the camera again to take more pictures of 'stupid things', as my mum would say. **Gareth Houghton, Merseyside**

I don't remember the camera, but the story made me laugh, Gareth. Your mum sounds like someone not to be messed with! – Nigel Atherton, Group Editor

OPPOSITE EXPERIENCE

Mike Hay paints a rosy picture indeed of the merits of independent retailers (*Letters*, AP 17 May). I don't dispute that this is an accurate mirror of his personal experience, but I'm afraid my experience was the exact opposite.

About ten years ago, I wanted to buy a Konica Minolta Dimage A2. This was a bridge camera that was highly regarded in its day and it retailed, if I remember rightly, for around £450 (even now, incidentally, that camera is an object lesson in ergonomic design, although image quality is obviously somewhat lacking by modern standards).

My local retailer had the camera in stock, but I couldn't help noticing that I could get the camera for £100 less online, which was a very large difference in percentage terms. It seems slightly quaint now, but like many people ten years ago I was nervous about making a major purchase online, so I went to the shop, looked at the camera and liked it.

Then I made my big mistake and said, 'This is being sold for £100 less online, but I also appreciate that you have overheads and give personal service and advice that I value, so can we compromise halfway?' The reply was, 'If you wish to do that, you may leave these premises and never come back again.'



Write to...

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Needless to say, that retailer was instrumental in pushing me into the online experience – which I have been doing ever since. Personally, I only use online retailers who also have a main showroom attached to their operation or those who operate a chain of shops as well. I find that if I pay a visit, I invariably get good advice from enthusiastic staff, but the really big advantage is that they carry a vastly bigger range of stock than any independent can hope to do. Judging from the way the market has changed in the past ten years, I suspect I am not alone.

Roger King, Essex

I wonder if that independent retailer you refer to is still in business. It certainly doesn't deserve to be, if your experience is anything to go by – Nigel Atherton, Group Editor

MORE ABOUT MOVIES

I read with interest that your magazine is going to give more attention to videographers (*Letters*, AP 19 April). I have been reading AP since the late 1950s and, as I was working selling cameras when cameras were cameras (just joking) with GE Williamson – a big name in Glasgow – I have followed cine cameras, from 9.5mm, 8mm, Super 8 and now digital. My interest was still photographs, with a passing interest in movie photography.

But six years ago, I bought a budget Panasonic camcorder and, with help of iMovie and YouTube, I became an enthusiast. I am sure there are thousands of keen moviemakers out there filming their interests. I find it odd there has never been a magazine for the amateur in this field. Maybe it's because there is plenty advice on the net. But it's still nice to read reviews, advice and comments the old way – relaxing in an armchair! I am glad to hear that you intend to rectify this. I wait with eager enthusiasm.

Stuart Smith, Ayrshire

I should make it clear that we are not going to start writing about camcorders, but we will be offering advice on getting more from the movie-mode button on still cameras. We're also about to hold our first masterclass on video at Pinewood Studios, details of which can be found on page 44 of this issue – Nigel Atherton, Group Editor

CAMERA TEST QUERY

Your tests provide a good picture of handling of a camera, but they tell the reader nothing about the extent of intra-camera variability within a particular model population. For example, if I were a camera distributor, I would ensure that the specimen received by AP for testing was faultless, so how confident can a reader be that the individual camera they buy off the shelf or online will meet the same standards of quality as the model tested by AP?

You always focus on the contrasts between different models, but never on the variability within a specific model population.

What The Duck





BOTH PICTURES © ALAN GREEN

KEEP UP THE FIGHT

I was shocked to see that the screening the council had put up around a primary school in Woodford Green, north-east London, has started to break. Shock horror! This means someone walking down the road might see a child playing hop, skip and jump. Should I ring the police or try to repair it myself? Actually, of course, the screening has long been a local joke – a perfect example of the paranoia of today's world.

My son, Dr Patrick Green, who has been photographing the development of the Olympic site nearby as a record, says he finds it virtually impossible to

visit the area today without being stopped by security guards or police. We will soon be like Hungary where, as reported (AP 19 April), one should not photograph if there are people in the area unless one has their permission.

Years ago a friend recorded a video of his grandson's sports day. He took 12 copies to sell at the Christmas Bazaar. The headmaster was horrified.

I hope AP will keep up the fight for photographers to photograph in a public place otherwise, in a few years, the use of the camera in public places will be banned.

Alan Green, via email

The increasing hostility towards photography in public places by the public, while the exponential growth in surveillance of the public continues unabated, is one of the most depressing aspects of modern life. The only thing that saddens me more than seeing us sleepwalking towards Orwell's vision is the widespread support for it from large sections of society.

However, a school sports day is another matter. Giving out copies of the video to other parents who want them is one thing, but selling them is another. Schools are not public places and they have a duty to protect the children in their care. There are good reasons why some children's identities and whereabouts need to kept out of the public realm – Nigel Atherton, Group Editor

Just how consistent are individual cameras within the same model range? It would be illuminating if you were to test, say, three specimens of the same camera and assess just how consistent is their performance.

I should hasten to add in AP's defence that this is not an issue peculiar to AP. Whichever magazine or website one chooses to read, just how confident can a reader be that the camera they purchase will perform as well as (or better than) the specimen provided for magazine/website testing? **Pete Jeans, Gloucestershire**

Most cameras we receive for test are sealed and packed in the same way as they would be when sent to a store or to a consumer. Manufacturers build their products to within a certain tolerance, and having visited factories myself, I know that these tolerances are very small, and that manufacturers

test a number of items that roll off the production line in each batch. Sensors, for example, are rejected if they have a certain number of defective pixels.

To really test any form of consistency, I would suggest that a test of a lot more than three cameras would be needed, all of which would probably come from the same initial batch. The problem is, manufacturers have a limited number of review samples and a lot of publications wanting to test them, so even if they were from different batches, hogging potentially the entire loan stock of a new model for a test would not be possible – unless it were done once everyone else had finished with them, in which case who knows what knocks and bangs they may have endured along the way. Besides which, AP always strives to be first on the list for samples, not the last – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

BACK CHAT

AP reader Dave Mason takes a lighthearted look at the lengths some people may go to in their quest to upgrade their camera

THE 1970S were notorious for crimes against good taste, and yet against all odds the period produced some extremely attractive cameras – a point not missed by Fujifilm and Olympus, among others, which have taken advantage of the retro trend.

In your review of the Fujifilm X-T1 (AP 15 March), I read that I should 'prepare to want one'. Thank you. I do now. However, the problem is one of funds because my income just can't keep up with the speed of upgrades and new cameras. Unfortunately, my original wealth-creation plan, to create a global brand of 'potato-sack pockets' for the discerning photographer who wants to discreetly carry his large DSLR, failed. With cameras in said pockets, robust braces were necessary to offset gravity. However, during field trials, an unforeseen side effect was that with the braces attached, my trousers behaved like a berserk bungee jumper, resulting in what was described by our local police officer as 'repeat boxer shorts-related incidents'. My solution – to liberate some components from the Clifton Suspension Bridge – has been stalled by not being able to work out what won't be missed. So it's time for plan B.

Under cover of darkness, I shall write anonymously to all the camera manufacturers, detailing enhancements to their existing cameras that will truly recreate that retro 'film' experience. These suggestions will be so irresistible that they will be unable to help themselves as they claim them for their own, and so the next generation of cameras will be born. As everyone part exchanges their 'old' cameras, I shall take advantage of the now over-supply of equipment. Simple.

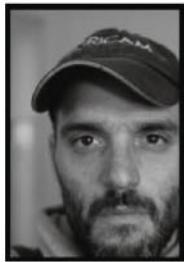
It's a work in progress at the moment, but I'm thinking along the lines of a scratch-and-sniff panel with that authentic film smell, for when you put the card in the camera. Or, how about no matter how many gigabytes on the card, it will only save 36 pictures? Maybe, when downloading, it will take a week to transfer the pictures to the computer, with the equivalent cost of postage deducted from your bank account. As an added bonus, random images could be stamped with a digital label stating 'overexposed' or 'camera shake'. These could be automatically uploaded to photo-sharing websites, for a game of 'photo bingo', creating a whole new entertainment industry.

Of course, there is an alternative. I could just get off the upgrade express, rather than letting my lack of willpower consign me to a life of camera envy and angst. Would that be so bad? Film, digital, APS-C or full frame? I could go on. Each solution has its own characteristics that will find favour with some and fault with others. Whatever your preference, they are all different roads to the same destination – taking photographs. That said, though, I still wouldn't mind if my road were 1970s shaped with a twist of the 21st century.

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PHOTO INSIGHT

Photographer and mountaineer Doug Kofsky discusses his epic image of Pakistan's Baltoro Glacier and his fascination with the history of mountaineering



DOUG KOFSKY

American photographer Doug Kofsky took his first hike into the mountains when he was just 18 and right away began documenting the sites through his photographic work. Since then, he has travelled to various locations throughout the world, including the Himalayas in 2008. He lives in New York City. To see more of his work, visit [www.dougkofsky.com](http://dougkofsky.com).

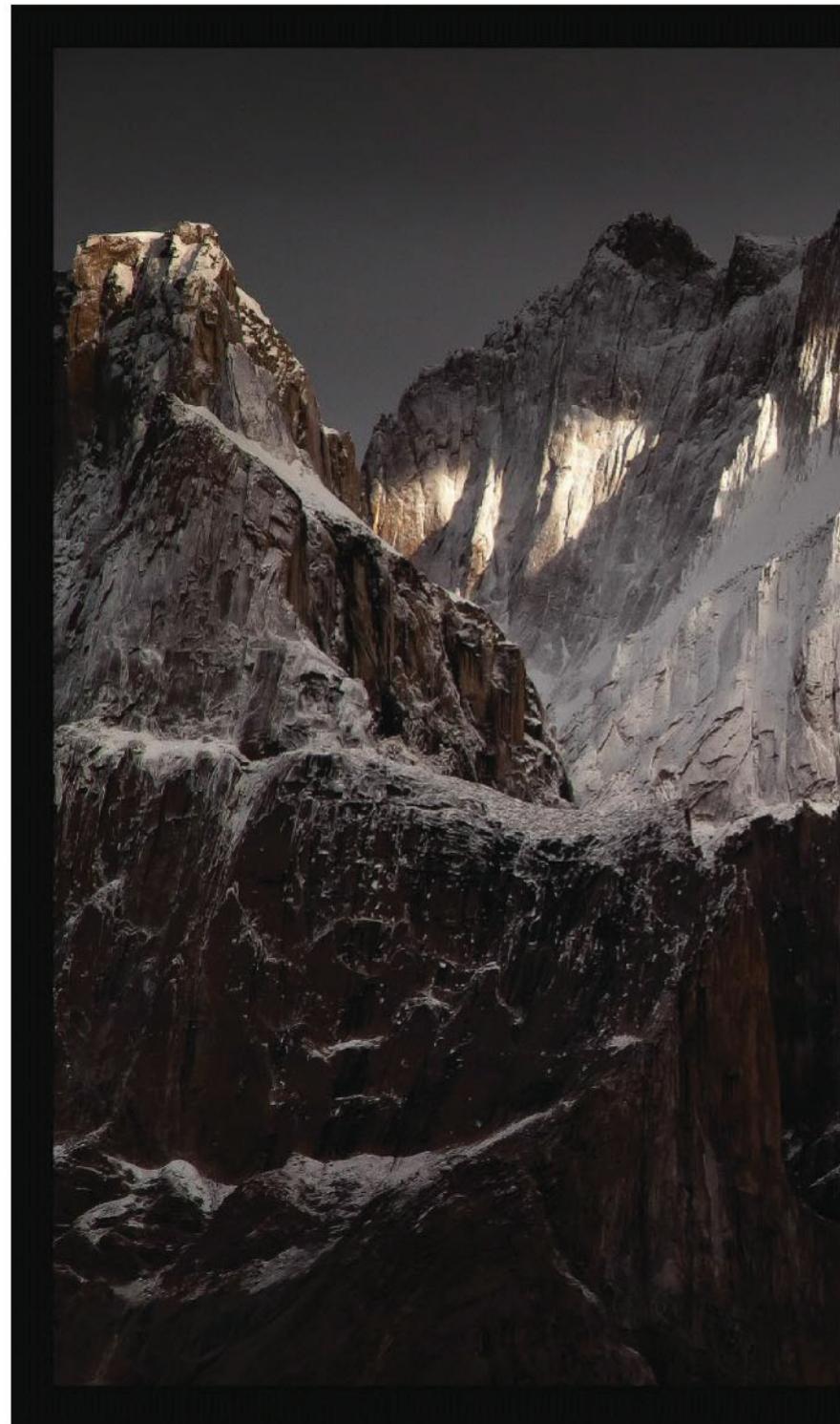
THE REASONS for my love of mountaineering are very personal. The earliest parts of my life were spent growing up in the suburbs of Boston in the USA, and when I reached the age of 18 I decided to take my first trip. I spent a month hiking in the Sangre de Cristo [Blood of Christ] mountains, a subrange of the Colorado Rockies. I was following in the footsteps of my father, who had been on expeditions to the Alps in Nepal and to Pakistan. He had this beautiful book full of newspaper clippings that I would leaf through on an almost daily basis. I was struck by how these adventurers would go to these places and then come back with images to show that these kinds of places existed.

When I went on my first trip, it was, without any sense of hyperbole, absolutely life-changing. While I was in the Rockies, I discovered a different order and structure. It gave me a lot of strength. I had just started photography around the same time and I realised that my success lay in combining my twin passions of photography and mountains. I quickly understood that photography is about more than just skill – it's about knowing what to shoot. If you shoot something you really care about, it will consistently show through in your images. That gave me the focus to concentrate on one subject in my photography, and, as a result, photograph the greatest mountains in world in the best possible way I could.

This image was taken on the Baltoro Glacier in Baltistan, Pakistan. It's a region that is particularly significant for me. I've spent a lot of time studying the exploits of world mountaineers, and the stories and history that defined them. The great British mountaineer Chris Bonington has been on expeditions to this area, and in 2011, I finally got the chance to travel there myself.

The picture was taken about halfway down the glacier near a camp called Urdukas, which is the last place you can step onto the glacier. The glacier is potentially the biggest cliff in the world, and I'd read about the various attempts to get to the summit.

The Baltoro track is very hemmed in.



'The sun shone through a thick bank of clouds and gave a stunning pop of light on each of these mountains across the glacier'

You're always looking at the huge glacier looming above you. I was standing on a grassy slope where I could trek a little way up the glacier. I only hiked a little way because everywhere you go you're afraid something's going to fall on your head. You need to be a bit of a climbing arachnid!

During my trips, I always make a point of getting up when it's still dark because I

find that I have the greatest luck with the light as it's rising over the landscape. On this occasion, the sun shone through a thick bank of clouds and gave a stunning pop of light on each of these mountains across the glacier. It was incredible and I spent the entire morning documenting the scene.

On my first few trips to the Himalayas I took a compact camera. The pictures I



© Doug Kofsky

produced were very disappointing. The camera unfortunately suffered on the pixel front when it came to trying to make big prints. The picture here was taken using a Canon EOS 500D with a 50mm lens. I chose the EOS 500D over a more professional DSLR because of weight. The digital sensor of the EOS 500D is fairly close to that of a more expensive camera, although what you do get with the more professional camera is weather sealing, which I knew I'd miss. However, the need to travel light outweighed my other requirements.

I fund my own expeditions, which take

place every 12-18 months and usually last for a minimum of five weeks. The longest I have been at a location is around ten weeks. You have to consider the logistics of getting to somewhere like Asia, the altitude and also the fact that some of the areas are quite remote so it can take a while to get there.

I enjoy travelling in Asia – the region has a mythical feel to it. Gaining an understanding of the cultures in these areas is something I find fulfilling. It's interesting because the 14 greatest mountains in the world are all in the areas of Nepal, Pakistan and Tibet. The logistics of how people travel to these places

also fascinates me. For example, when the Duke of Abruzzi, an Italian mountaineer and explorer, first came to the Baltoro in 1909, he had 500 porters and probably brought four-poster beds. I'm fascinated by the evolution that has taken place over the past 100 years or so, and what's possible now compared to what they did then. When the Italian photographer and mountaineer Vittorio Sella visited the Himalayas, he used horses to transport his tripod, large-format camera and around 40 30x40cm glass plates. Now, all I need is a converted backpack and a DSLR full-frame camera. It couldn't be simpler. **AP**

Doug Kofsky
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AP guide to...

Shooting infrared landscapes

Infrared doesn't have to be daunting. **Phil Hall** reveals how you take striking infrared landscape images

Infrared can produce some wonderful effects that give the image real 'bite' with a surreal look



THANKS to its unique characteristics, infrared photography can produce some truly beautiful results that have a lovely ethereal quality about them. It's a perfect technique for landscapes, and one that doesn't require you to get up at the crack of dawn for the best light. We'll discover why a little later, but first we need to understand a little more about the science behind infrared.

In a nutshell, infrared light is a spectrum of light beyond what the human eye can see. This is because our eyes can only detect a small range of wavelengths that make up the frequencies of visible and invisible light, known as the electromagnetic spectrum. The light we see is classed as visible light and ranges from red to blue (violet), with the typical human eye responding to wavelengths from about 390–650nm (nanometers). Infrared light has a wavelength longer than is visible to the red receptors in our eyes at 700nm and sits just below visible red light in the electromagnetic spectrum. This results in an invisible infrared light world that looks completely different to the one we're accustomed to, with subjects reflecting back infrared light as well as visible light.

INFRARED LIGHT

The sun is by far the best source of infrared light, although how much infrared light a subject reflects back will vary, with some subjects reflecting infrared light better than others. For instance, we perceive a leaf to be green as the chlorophyll in the leaves has a high green reflectivity. However, it also reflects infrared light incredibly well, so when you're shooting an infrared black & white image, it results in foliage appearing a ghostly bright white.

In contrast to this, bright-blue skies absorb infrared light, rendering them almost pitch black, while even relatively pale skies can take on a much darker tone. In both instances, the effect is most pronounced when the sun is at its most intense during the middle of the day. While shooting under such conditions normally means harsh shadows and high contrast that aren't suited to a lot of landscape images, it's perfect for infrared, with the combination of the bright-white foliage and rich, dark skies resulting in an image with bags of contrast that has real 'bite'.

SHOOTING INFRARED

While shooting with film simply required a dedicated infrared film and filter, things are a little different for digital imaging. This is because digital sensors have been designed to block out infrared light to ensure that the captured visible light is rendered faithfully, with sensors engineered with an infrared blocking filter (also known as a hot-mirror filter) that sits in front of the sensor.

To shoot infrared, one option is to remove the hot-mirror filter from the sensor filter pack and replace it with another filter of the same thickness that only allows infrared light to pass through it. There are a number of filter strengths available, but perhaps the



Hoya's R72 filter is a great starting point for infrared photography



most popular is the 720nm filter. Blocking out the entire visible colour spectrum, only infrared light can pass through. It requires only around +1EV of exposure adjustment, so handheld shooting is possible. And because the filter isn't blocking the optical

path between the lens and the viewfinder, you can compose and focus as you would do normally.

This is a great option if you wish to shoot infrared regularly, but because the camera can no longer capture visible light, the more

HOW TO SHOOT INFRARED

INFRARED filters are almost black in appearance, and by blocking out any visible light they bring with them their own specific shooting characteristics.

The first of these is that the exposure time will be extended considerably, increasing by 5-6 stops, so even in bright conditions a tripod or support will be required. The knock-on effect of this is that in many instances, it won't be possible to freeze elements of your scene.

Just as you might have experienced when shooting with a strong neutral density filter, focusing and composition also need to be set before the filter is fitted. This isn't too much of an inconvenience once you get used to this process, but you'll need to take extra care with focusing. Lenses are designed to focus on visible light and not infrared light, so it's advisable to offset your focus accordingly to compensate for this. While not so prevalent on mode lenses, many optics carry an infrared focus marker to indicate how far you must offset your focus to compensate for infrared light. This is merely a guide as it will vary depending

on the filter you use, and so long as an aperture of around f/8-11 is used, it should be enough to ensure that the depth of field is sufficient to be maintained throughout the scene.

Finally, perhaps the most important creative decision you make when shooting infrared is whether you want your images to display a dramatic mono look or a more surreal colour treatment. Black & white images offer a more readily accepted representation, with colour infrared images a little too unnatural for many viewers.

Older lenses
feature an infrared focus marker, as is the case with the white dot on this Nikon lens



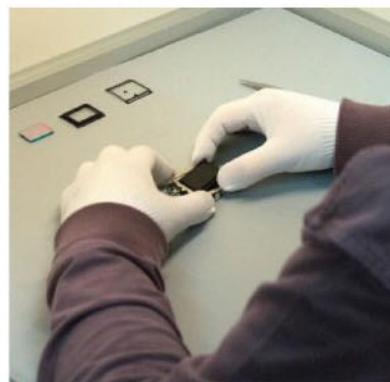
False colour



Traditional mono



When shooting infrared, you have the choice of shooting false colour or more traditional mono shots



If you're serious about infrared, you may want to think about converting a DSLR

filters are glued in place and require chemicals to release them from their mounts, while in other cases it's just not practical to convert certain models.

If you do fancy taking the conversion route, look for an affordable second-hand model and either attempt the conversion yourself or use one of the specialist companies that offers infrared conversion, such as www.advancedcameraservices.com.

co.uk. They offer conversions from £290 and will be able to tell you whether or not your desired model can be converted.

FILTERS

The alternative to converting your camera to infrared is to attach a dedicated infrared filter to the front of your lens, allowing infrared light to pass through but blocking out all or most visible light. This is a much more cost-effective solution.

Infrared filters are available from the likes of B+W, Cokin, Hoya and Tiffen, and are available in various strengths, indicated by the wavelength at which it passes light, measured in nanometers (nm). The strength you opt for will depend on their intended application (some are used in the scientific field, for example), but for general infrared photography, Hoya's R72 circular infrared filter is a popular choice. Available in thread sizes from 46-77mm (£35-£85), the filter has a strength of 720nm and is classed as near-infrared as it's near the red light wavelength (600-700nm) on the electromagnetic spectrum.

Infrared

casual shooter will need a second or third body that can be converted. Opening up and operating on your DSLR and removing the hot-mirror filter is a skilled job, with some DSLRs being easier to adapt than others. This is because some hot-mirror

TROUBLE SHOOTING LENSES

THERE are a couple of pitfalls that can beset you when shooting infrared. One major issue is the lens you shoot with, as some can produce a hotspot at the centre of the photograph caused by internal reflections of the infrared light within the lens. With this in mind, it's worth experimenting with the lenses you intend to shoot with at different apertures and focal lengths to assess how they perform, while there are extensive lists online of suitable lenses for a range of systems.



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I FIRST tried infrared photography about 25 years ago with an Olympus OM-1, Kodak High Speed infrared film and a red filter. I loved the photos I could get with it, but the film was quite tricky to process without fogging it.

With the advent of digital, I started using the Hoya R72 Infrared filter. The only problem with this technique is that the filter is opaque to normal light and the minimum exposure time required is about 30secs. It's possible to take decent photographs in this

way, but I've found that the long exposure often causes a lot of noise in the final image.

It was then that I decided to invest in a camera converted to infrared, allowing me to take infrared photos handheld, with normal exposure times, and without the need for a tripod. I bought a second-hand Canon EOS 1000D and had it converted, opting for the 720nm filter. In the old days of film, taking an infrared picture was very hit and miss, and the final result would be unpredictable, so the great thing about a converted digital camera is that you can see straightaway whether a shot is going to work or not. Images straight out of the camera usually have a reddish-brown tone, so I usually adjust the colours a little in Lightroom and Photoshop.

STEP BY STEP GUIDE



1 Best practice is to shoot in raw and set a custom white balance. With your infrared filter attached, select custom white balance from your camera's menu and then, pointing the camera downwards, take a reading from a patch of grass. This will massively reduce the appearance of red in the display.



2 Remove the filter and frame up your image before setting the focus. Then set the focus to manual and if your lens has an infrared focus marker, use that to adjust focus. Failing that, ensure you're using a smaller aperture than usual to ensure there's sufficient depth of field in your shot to compensate for this.



3 Shooting in manual or aperture priority, take a test exposure and then review the histogram. You're looking for a wide histogram that spreads out to the edges as much as possible. This will perhaps require +2 to -3EV exposure compensation to achieve this. Adjust, shoot again and then review.



© LEE CASTER

Lee loves infrared for the extra dimension it gives his mono images

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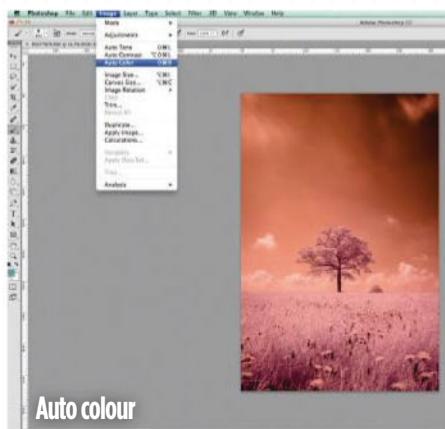


I HAVE only recently started shooting infrared, but am already a massive fan. I find it's perfect for producing impactful landscape and architectural images, especially when

the light is too harsh, or too dull for shooting decent colour images. Although it's great for shooting the more usual trees and clouds, I've also been very impressed by the extra dimension it has added to my more usual black & white shots, finding clouds and contrast in seemingly empty blue skies, and bringing out shadow details which are barely visible on the standard spectrum.

I had my Canon EOS 5D Mark II converted with a 720nm filter, shooting in

raw to give complete control over the image in processing. I have the camera mode set to black & white, and using live view I can get a fairly accurate impression of what the final shot will look like as it takes a little getting used to seeing the world in infrared. The direction of the sun in relation to the camera has a massive impact. Shooting into low sun can make for a very washed-out image, whereas shooting with your back to the sun, or side on, can totally transform a scene.



4 Bring the images into Bridge and open them in Adobe Camera Raw. Here you can make some minor adjustments to the contrast and exposure, but the biggest change in the colour characteristics of the image needs to happen in Photoshop. First, open your image and then go to Image>Auto Color.



5 To swap the brownish red cast that you've probably got in the sky, we need to channel swap the Red and Blue channels. Select the Channel Mixer from the Adjustments panel and for the Red Output Channel set Red at 0 and Blue at 100, while for the Blue Output Channel, reverse this.



6 If you want to produce a mono infrared image, select Black & White from the Adjustments panel and adjust the sliders until you're happy with the look of the image. Noise can be introduced here, so make sure you assess the image at 100% to ensure that the image hasn't been compromised.

The UK's most prestigious competition for amateur photographers



**2nd
PRIZE**

**2 Mark Helliwell
Cheshire 49pts**

Nikon D300, 18-200mm, 1/125sec at f/5.6, ISO 100
He's Behind You Judges say Looking at this image of two owls – a great grey and a horned – there's a very famous photograph that instantly springs to mind: David Bailey's image of the Kray twins. This is such a different and humorous take on animal portraiture that we couldn't help but award it second place

1 Gerard Sexton Oxon 50pts

Canon EOS 1D Mark IV, 400mm, 1.4x converter, 1/3200sec at f/4.5, ISO 800
Heron Judges say This was one of those shots where the judges had to stop and stare to work out whether or not the heron was real. The reason is that it's such a perfectly captured moment. The position of the legs, the spread of the wings and the arc of the branch have all come together to form a dynamic image. Not only that, but the subtle lighting has resulted in a dramatic and engaging shot



3 Ellie Willis

Devon 48pts

Nikon D90, 18-50mm, 1/125sec at f/16, ISO 200, 2-point flash lighting and two large softbox attachments

Ferrets Judges say Ellie's image of her brother and his two beloved ferrets after building them a new home was a shot we kept revisiting. Where it succeeds is in its simplicity. It's a portrait that brings together the human and animal world in a clean and unfussy photographic manner – and who doesn't love ferrets?



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APOY 2014 Amateur Photographer OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

Animal Planet

There were a number of strong entries for round 2 of APOY 2014. Here we reveal the top 30 photographs from our **Animal Planet** round

Gerard Sexton, of Wallingford in Oxon, is the winner of our Animal Planet round of APOY 2014. Gerard will receive an Olympus OM-D E-M10 with a 14-42mm EZ Pancake zoom, a 45mm f/1.8 portrait lens, a 40-150mm zoom, a 9mm fisheye lens, a macro adapter and a street case. That's a total retail price of £1,200. The E-M10 has a 16.1-million-pixel, four thirds-sized CMOS sensor and a TruePic VII image processing system. The 14-42mm EZ Pancake zoom lens is the most compact pancake lens and the 45mm f/1.8 portrait optic is ideal for low-light portrait work without flash.

Our second-placed winner is **Mark Helliwell**, of Macclesfield in Cheshire, who will receive an Olympus Pen E-PL5 camera plus a 14-42mm and 40-150mm twin-lens zoom kit worth £500. Despite its small size, the E-PL5 offers serious image quality with its powerful 16.1-million-pixel sensor and a new OM-D component in the TruePic VI image processor. It also has lightning-fast autofocus.

Ellie Willis, of Newton Abbot in Devon, finished third and wins an Olympus Stylus SP-100EE Ultra Zoom camera, with a 16-million-pixel sensor and 3in LCD screen. The SP-100EE includes an autofocus lock so you need never lose a shot due to fuzzy focusing. The camera also features a 50x optical Ultra Zoom lens with a focal length ranging from 24-1,200mm.

THE 2014 LEADER BOARD

Jevgenijs Scolokovs from Latvia has leapt into the top spot with 82pts, having taken tenth place two months in a row. In second place with 79pts we find 2012 APOY winner Dan Deakin. In third place is Chris Wood, who took fourth place in the first round and 28th in this round

1	Jevgenijs Scolokovs	82pts	6	George Taylor	61pts
2	Dan Deakin	79pts	6	Jianwei Yang	61pts
3	Chris Wood	70pts	8	Andrew Blake	60pts
4	Conrad Ziebland	68pts	9	Gerard Sexton	59pts
5	Steven Webb	64pts	10	Dusica Paripovic	58pts

The UK's most prestigious competition for amateur photographers

4 **Chris Dixon** Hampshire **47pts**

Nikon D700, 70-200mm, 1/500sec at f/2.8, ISO 200

Working on the chain gang **Judges say** A moving image from Chris bringing home the reality of captive animals

4



5 **Iain McConnell** Wrexham **46pts**

Olympus E-510, 14-45mm, 1/160sec at f/8, ISO 100, 2 remote flashes with RF-602 triggers

Cat and toy **Judges say** Iain's accomplished image really impressed the judges and is more than deserving of fifth place

6 **Angela Nelson** Tyne and Wear **45pts**

Canon EOS 60D, 60mm macro, 1/200sec at f/18, ISO 100

Baby tree frog **Judges say** Angela keeps frogs as pets, and as such, is well equipped to capture these small creatures in unique ways

7 **Steve Webb** West Midlands **44pts**

Sigma DP1 Merrill, 19mm, 1/160sec at f/7.1, ISO 100

Derwent the duck **Judges say** This was a very popular shot with the judges. Getting down low, Steve has given us a duck's-eye view

8 **Leo Walton** Nottingham **43pts**

Nikon D600, 70-200mm, TC-14E teleconverter, 1/1250sec at f/4, ISO 200, tripod

Going for a waddle **Judges say** Taken in Antarctica, this shot of chinstrap penguins makes great use of simplicity and depth of field

7



8



9 **Dennis Low** West Sussex **42pts**

Sony Alpha 7R, 50mm, 1/125sec at f/1.8, ISO 320

Orphaned lambs **Judges say** The colour and light are the key ingredients here in this nicely observed shot from Dennis

10 **Jevgenijs Scolokovs** Latvia **41pts**

Canon EOS 5D, 35mm, 1/2000sec at f/1.6, ISO 100

On a lead **Judges say** The success of this image hinges on two factors – perspective and depth of field. The monochrome is also vital in its ability to reveal the details

11 **Susan Harding** West Sussex **40pts**

Nikon D800, 70mm macro, 1/8sec at f/2.8, ISO 640

Daydreaming **Judges say** This was shot during a day trip to the British Wildlife Centre and is an image many of us could easily miss

12 **Yehya Belhadad** Algeria **39pts**

Sony Alpha 33, 18-55mm, 1/125sec at f/7.1, ISO 400

Butterfly **Judges say** What a beautiful image. The background colour and insect's details are genuinely mesmerising

12



13 **Bill Sell** Carmarthenshire **38pts**

Nikon D100, 50mm, 1/200sec at f/1.8, ISO 500

Eye of the duck **Judges say** This is a typically excellent image from Bill. The focus on the eye really draws in the viewer

14 **Conrad Ziebland** Hertfordshire **37pts**

Pentax K-3, 35mm, 1/180sec at f/3.2, ISO 400, flash, radio trigger

The look **Judges say** Pet portraits are not an easy task, but with a little technical ingenuity Conrad has certainly pulled it off

15 **Ian Bramham** Cheshire **36pts**

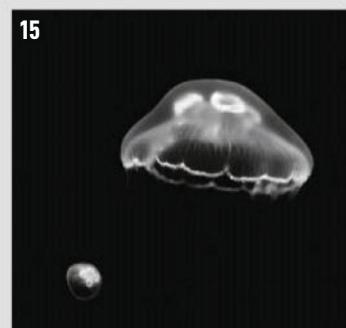
Nikon D700, 16-35mm, 1/100sec at f/4, ISO 6400

Moon jellyfish **Judges say** There's an eerie alien quality to these moon jellyfish, photographed in Ian's local aquarium

16 **Al Punja** East Sussex **35pts**

Canon EOS 7D, 15-85mm, 1/800sec at f/4.5, ISO 100

Lunch in the park **Judges say** There's so much to say about this shot. It's a great find and exposes one of the great virtues of having a keen photographic eye – capturing the moments others may miss



The UK's most prestigious competition for amateur photographers

17 Peter Warrington Oxon **34pts**
Olympus E-3, 14-60mm, 1/3500sec at f/22, ISO 100
Gull perch **Judges say** Peter waited near a post that was popular with gulls to catch this nice backlit image

18 Farid Sani Iran **33pts**
Olympus E-30, 12-50mm, 1/400sec at f/5.6, ISO 320
Bluethroat bird **Judges say** The vivid colours and simple composition made this a real stand-out image in the competition

19 Mark Crocker Greater London **32pts**
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 70-200mm, 1/2500sec at f/6.3, ISO 800
Stag **Judges say** A truly majestic representation of an iconic and revered creature. This image oozes atmosphere

20 Florinel Sandu Romania **31pts**
Nikon D90, 150-500mm, 1/400sec at f/8, ISO 500
Great tit **Judges say** Florinel's image of a great tit benefits from a vivid clean background and pin-sharp focus on the subject

21 Dan Deakin Bristol **30pts**
Nikon D700, 24-70mm, 1/125sec at f/11, ISO 560, Speedlight, softbox
Joey **Judges say** A lovable portrait of a friend's dog from APOY 2012 champion Dan Deakin. Using just a small squeaky toy, Dan was able to grab the dog's attention for just a couple of seconds

22 Seshikanth Middela Manchester **29pts**
Canon EOS 5D, 70-300mm, 1/250sec at f/5.6, ISO 3200
Capuchin monkey in a glass house **Judges say** Patience is a virtue. Seshikanth waited for over an hour to get this beautifully abstract portrait of a capuchin monkey through enclosure glass

23 Jenny Coughlan Ireland **28pts**
Nikon D700, 70-300mm, 1/125sec at f/5, ISO 200
Toowit **Judges say** This is a stark and moody portrait, one that benefits from the fact that Jenny has exposed for the highlights

24 Alison Lythgoe Buckinghamshire **27pts**
Nikon D600, 70-200mm, 1/400sec at f/5.6, ISO 1250
Four mallard ducklings **Judges say** What an idyllic scene. The still water and haze of the sun are beautiful elements

25 Aaron Karnovski Kent **26pts**
Nikon D800, 180mm, 1/500sec at f/4, ISO 800
Red squirrel **Judges say** Considering the declining numbers of red squirrels, it's always a pleasing sight to see images of them, particularly when the pictures are as good as this

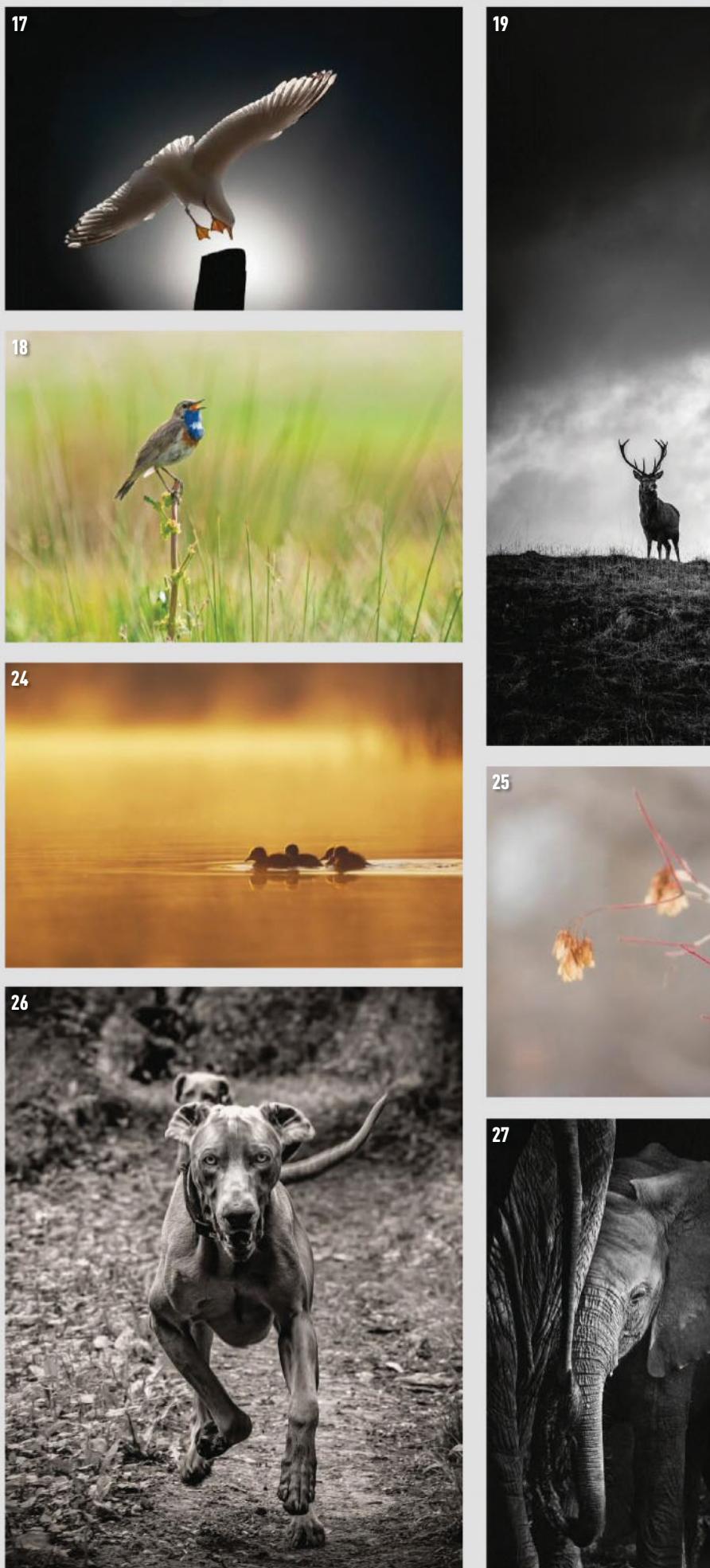
26 George Taylor Nottinghamshire **25pts**
Olympus OM-D E-M5, 75mm, 1/160sec at f/5.6, ISO 1250
Walking with my dogs **Judges say** George was looking to capture the power and grace of his Weimaraner dogs with this image

27 David Tolliday Cheshire **24pts**
Canon EOS 7D, 100-400mm, 1/320sec at f/5.6, ISO 400
Kruger National Park, South Africa **Judges say** This is a beautifully lit monochrome image that exudes a tender atmosphere

28 Chris Wood Gloucestershire **23pts**
Canon EOS 7D, 100-400mm, 1/125sec at f/1.8, ISO 100
Bow to the king **Judges say** Sometimes all you need is a simply composed portrait to convey the power of a subject

29 Andrew Blake North Yorkshire **22pts**
Canon EOS 400D, 70-300mm, 1/640sec at f/22, ISO 1600
Tchaikovsky **Judges say** What a stunning image. The reflection adds necessary compositional balance to lead the viewer's eye

30 Dusica Paripovic Sweden **21pts**
Nikon D5000, 35mm, 1/250sec at f/6.3, ISO 200
Wet through **Judges say** APOY's 2013 overall winner enters our second round with a hilarious shot of her cat post-bath

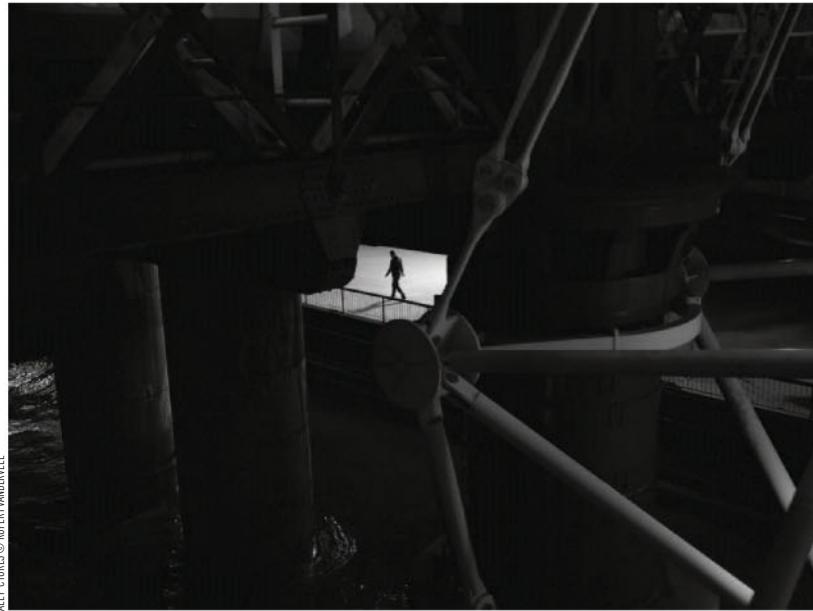




Spirit of the street



Fine-art photographer **Rupert Vandervell** discusses the themes behind his personal and haunting take on street photography and explains how the right camera came to help him to realise his vision. He talks to **Oliver Atwell**



ALL PHOTOS © RUPERT VANDERVELL

THE CITY can be a lonely place. Despite the rapid rise in population and the seeming overnight construction of architecture to accommodate the swarm, cities can often make you feel like you're the last person on earth. These themes of isolation are the underpinning of a body of work created by London-based photographer Rupert Vandervell, a man who revels in the solitude life can bring. Each graphic image – in four series called 'Urbanites', 'Man on Earth', 'Late Night Tales' and 'Duel' – tells its own story, yet easily functions within an overarching narrative about urban isolation.

'I'm obsessed with one particular theme – the lone figure in the street,' he says. 'I've often asked myself why. The idea of isolation is very indicative of my character. I have always enjoyed spending time alone. Sometimes I feel like I'm taking a photograph of myself in these figures surrounded by light and shade.'

It would be easy to imagine Rupert as a morose misanthrope from this opening admission. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. During our conversation, it becomes clear that Rupert is an individual infected by the joy of image-making, particularly when it comes to shooting in the city.

'I feel happiest when I'm shooting in the urban environment,' says Rupert. 'That really is the only place I want to take photographs. I love concrete and architecture, and the way light interacts with it. It's never the same two days in a row. The sun is always moving, which of course creates different lines and shadows. I get genuinely excited when I see these things, and I feel compelled to record them.'

Rupert shoots exclusively in London, which is his home town. However, it is more than convenience – the architecture that makes up the buzzing metropolis perfectly complements the images Rupert forms in his head.

'I'm drawn to the modern side of London,' says Rupert, 'particularly in the smooth surfaces that often go hand-in-hand with

these buildings. The way the light comes off smooth modern structures is interesting and clean. There's an area I adore around the Barbican. It's freshly done and the roads look great. It looks like a scene from a Futurist film. The great thing about shooting in London is that it's always changing. Every time you wake up, there's another fascinating structure.'

THE RIGHT LIGHT

Rupert's images are a wonderful example of the interaction between form, light and shade. Of course, such considered images need the right conditions and Rupert has strict ideas about what he requires.

'I'll only ever go out when the light is right,'



The time of day that Rupert shoots is crucial. He tends to favour the hour from 10am to 11am, when he says the light is 'cleaner'

'It's often the case that I'll find the right location, but there's too much pedestrian traffic'

Left: Rupert uses architecture, light and shade to frame his human subjects

he says. 'The summer is perfect because of the brilliant sun we often experience over London. I always look for what the light is doing in a location. I'll then figure out where I want to photograph it from and where I can make the most interesting picture. I need to consider how the geometry of the location will work with the light. It can sometimes take a while to get it all right.'

As any street photographer worth his or her salt will tell you, the time of day you shoot is crucial. Different times offer different types of light, and for Rupert's images to work he must act within a relatively tight window.

'I can't go out all day,' he says. 'The best time for me seems to be between 10am



and 11am. If you have guaranteed sunshine, it's a good hour to work. The middle of the day is the worst. It's like when you have a fluorescent bulb in a room – it's harsh light where nothing looks flattering. I could also shoot between 4pm and 6pm, but things can look a little softened then. Morning lights seems to be a little cleaner. If there's any kind of optimism in my work, it's to be found in that clean light.'

PEOPLE AND PLACES

The human element is what each of Rupert's images hinges on, and all that each image requires is a single figure. However, working in such a populated city can often be a problem.

'It's becoming harder and harder to get the right kind of figure in my images,' says Rupert. 'And even when I do have the right person, sometimes someone extra wanders into the frame. It's often the case that I'll find the right location, but there's too much pedestrian traffic. This will mean I have to return to the location another time, but of course that means the look of the light will have changed.'

That said, revisiting locations is not something Rupert is averse to. In fact, it forms part of his working method.





EXPOSING FOR HIGHLIGHTS

RUPERT generally exposes for the highlights in his images. 'The details in those areas of the frame are crucial to the image, so I can't afford to blow them out,' he says. 'Given the times of day I like to work, exposing for those areas works perfectly. I'll see where the light's hottest point is and ensure everything

is correctly exposed in that area. As I'm sure everyone knows, blown highlights can be a nightmare to fix. There are a couple of minor tweaks I have to make in Photoshop – such as the Levels – but otherwise I try to get everything right on location. Doing everything in Photoshop just wouldn't look right at all.'



'It benefits a project to introduce restrictions. When you work with the minimum resources, creativity kicks in'

 'I do tend to go back to places because, as I've said, they always look different each time,' says Rupert. 'As places are often reconstructed and altered, the way the light falls on them differs. Consequently, the way people interact and walk within the space changes. That's all part of the picture-making process.'

'One thing I do find particularly beneficial is giving myself restrictions,' continues Rupert. 'These days, I shoot mostly within a square mile. When I restrict myself to small areas, I look harder for shots rather than casting my net too wide. It benefits a project to introduce restrictions. When you work with the minimum resources, creativity kicks in.'

In addition to the location and light, stark black & white serves to further communicate the themes of urban solitude. By his own admission, colour would do nothing more than complicate matters.

'I guess I'm a black & white person through and through,' he says. 'I don't wear colourful clothes and my house features minimal tones, much to the dismay of my girlfriend. Black & white has always spoken to me. To be honest, I get a little confused by colour. There's a quality to black & white that's sorrowful and I'm very happy with how the aesthetic functions. Even when I'm faced with a vivid colourful scene, I'm always thinking how it can function within the parameters of monochrome.'

Of course, Rupert isn't averse to colour as a medium. In fact, he's full of admiration for those who are able to master it.

'Honestly, my opinion is formed from the fact that I began my journey in photography by producing black & white prints in the darkroom,' he admits. 'Printing in colour was never an option for me because the resources simply weren't available.'

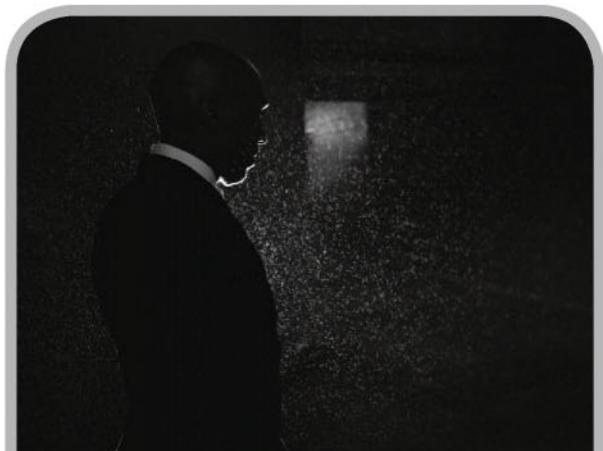
Therefore, my images have always taken place within the world of black & white.'

OLYMPUS FEVER

Most photographers have their favoured weapon of choice, and for Rupert there has only ever been one camera brand that has accompanied him on his photography odyssey – Olympus.

'I'm a big fan of Olympus' OM-D series,' says Rupert. 'I actually had a break from photography for around 25 years. During that time, I was working making short fashion films for brands such as *Vogue* and *Glamour*. Prior to that, I was working in photography capturing minimalist natural landscapes that look similar to the work I create now. I used Olympus cameras, then and returned to them when I put down the video camera and picked up an Olympus OM-D E-M5 camera. Once Olympus produced its micro four thirds technology, I knew I'd found what I was looking for.'

The size of the camera is perhaps the



LATE NIGHT TALES

AS RUPERT wanted to do a series where he was able to control things a little more, he worked with some models so he could position them in a way that he wanted. 'The images have a very film noir feel to them,' he says. 'That particular genre and its aesthetic is something I've always loved. With 'Late Night Tales', I thought it would be interesting to create something where there was more of a narrative running through it. I could dress the models up and direct them. I was able to create a bunch of characters from all walks of life. I found some places in the East End of London that were fantastic, such as in Bethnal Green. All the images are set at night. At that time, these areas were like ghost towns. Something else that was new for me was working with artificial light. Sometimes the characters needed a little extra illumination, so I used a single portable light panel!'

Above left:
Through the considered use of location and subject, Rupert is able to hint at mysterious narratives

Below: Using a lightweight Olympus OM-D E-M5, Rupert is able to get covert shots in the city

biggest appeal for Rupert. The ease of carrying around such a compact camera means that it can be slipped into his jacket pocket with no concern for bulk and size.

'I have no interest in carrying around something like a Canon EOS 5D,' says Rupert. 'I've used the EOS 5D for video and if I was working in a studio perhaps I'd be more tolerant. But for street work, I need something I can easily carry and conceal. I don't want people to know I'm carrying around a camera. It's difficult to blend in when you're advertising yourself as a photographer. You stand out and, as a result, the nature of your subject's actions change. That thinking extends to the lens too – I use a 20mm f/1.7 pancake lens. I don't want to use a zoom lens, as I'd prefer to be in the best position to begin with.'

Rupert's upcoming project continues the themes so familiar from his previous work. This time the project is less about the architecture and more about the abstract.

'I'm working in similar locations to my previous projects' says Rupert. 'However, this time I'm also including a couple of shots from Barcelona. The way the light falls on this Spanish city is fantastic and it's been brilliant for my latest work. I'm using the human figure in a much more abstract way. It's like looking at a piece from an incomplete puzzle – you're not quite sure what you're looking at. It's been a challenge, but I've had a lot of fun doing it.' **AP**



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APpraisal

Expert advice, help and tips from AP Editor Damien Demolder



PICTURE
OF THE
WEEK

Over The Edge Sergiy Srednytskyy

Canon EOS 550D, 70-300mm, 1/640sec at f/13

WE ALL love to be amazed by the tricks of a conjurer and feel a sense of wonder. Here the conjurer is Sergiy. Through sleight of hand and subtle suggestion, he shows us a massive view but forces us to look at a tiny part of it. The draw is undeniable and irresistible. When the picture is seen at the right size, the first thing our eyes go to is the skier – even though he occupies only a minuscule part of the frame.

The skier stands out for several reasons: he is the only black part of the scene; he contrasts dramatically with the bright tones behind him; he is perched on the seam where the ground meets the distant slopes; and he

is the only person in a subtle landscape.

Blowing the image up to study it closer, I noticed that some of the detail and edges are a little 'crunchy' and 'digital' from oversharpening. If you shoot in JPEG format, this is sometimes an effect the camera introduces to attempt to create the appearance of super-sharpness, but in a moderate and relaxing scene like this the sharpening is a little too fierce.

A good way of combating this sharpening is to introduce blur. Applied correctly, it will be just enough to fill the white haloes on edges without destroying detail itself.

First, I enlarged the image on-screen to

100% so I could see what I was doing, then I applied a layer of 1-pixel's worth of Gaussian Blur. I faded this to the Darken blending mode, and then, using the slider, I faded the effect of the filter until I had the right balance of filling in the haloes and masking the detail. It really is that simple, and while at normal viewing distance you might not recognise what the difference is, you will see that there is a difference – digital turns to natural (see below). You won't see it in the magazine reproduction, but you will see it in a print.

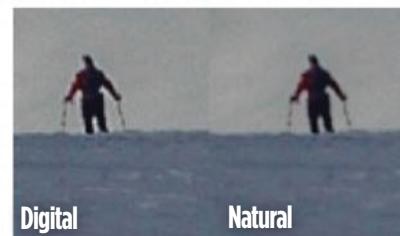
This is a wonderful picture. I love the colours, the composition, the beauty of the place and Sergiy's use of space, depth and scale. My changes are a minor technicality in a visually stunning photograph. This is a very worthy picture of the week.



Gaussian Blur



Fading effect



WIN

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Why they won: Charlie Waite comments on LPOTY finalists

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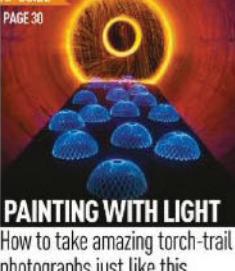


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APTestbench

Over the next few pages we present this week's **tests, reader questions and technique pointers**



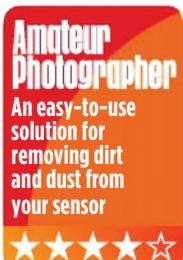
Eyelead Sensor Gel Stick £34.99

www.marchwooduk.co.uk

EYELEAD is a German company that specialises in producing sensor-cleaning products. One of Eyelead's new additions to its commercial range is a product that has been used in professional sensor-cleaning circles for a long time. The Eyelead Sensor Gel Stick is quite a simple concept. Essentially, it's a stick with adhesive gel on the end that is designed to be used on a camera's sensor to remove dust and oil. The gel is specially formulated to capture all the dust without lifting the glass off the sensor and to leave no residue behind from the gel.

When tested on a variety of camera sensors, I found the Sensor Gel Stick performed well, removing all the visible dust with a couple of passes. It also removed minor oil residue on the sensor. One thing to note is it doesn't work with Sony sensors, as the adhesion of the gel is too much for the surface of the sensor. However, Eyelead states that it is working on a Sony-specific solution.

Included with the Sensor Gel Stick are ten strips of sticky paper that are stickier than the gel. By simply dabbing the gel on the paper, the paper removes the dust and dirt from the gel so it can be used again and again. **Callum McInerney-Riley**



The AP guarantee to you

All our tests are conducted by people who understand the product area, as well as photography. We aim to discover any shortcomings, as well as finding those aspects that deserve praise. All our tests are thorough, honest and independent

Be-ez LA Robe graphite bag (15in) Around £21.50

www.be-ez.com



FOR MANY

photographers, a high-performance laptop plays a vital role in their photography work. These products rarely come cheap, so it is important to keep a laptop protected. The Be-ez LA Robe bag offers a high level of protection while not adding much extra weight. The outside of the bag is made from jersey fabric. Inside the case is 5mm of low-resilience polyurethane foam that absorbs impacts and excessive pressure. The inner lining, available in grey, red and blue, is a fleece material that helps prevent the laptop from being scratched.

Dimensions of the bag are stated to fit laptops up to the size of 359x247x18mm. However, I found the older MacBook Pro with dimensions of 364x249x24mm would also fit, but it was a squeeze. Other versions of the LA Robe bag are available to fit the iPad Air, MacBook Air 11 and 13, MacBook Pro 13 and MacBook Pro 13 with retina display.

The bags are available from a number of outlets in the UK or online. Check website for details. **Callum McInerney-Riley**

Amateur Photographer

A padded laptop case that offers a fantastic level of protection



FORTHCOMING TESTS

In the next few weeks AP hopes to run the following equipment through the most rigorous testing procedures in the industry...

Leica T

With a 16.3 million pixel APS C sized sensor, is Leica's highly anticipated CSC as good as it looks? We put it to the test.

AP 7 June

Wacom Intuos Pro

We test the latest high end Wacom graphics tablet, with improved multi touch sensor and wireless accessory kit included.

AP 7 June

Tamron 16-300mm f/3.5-5.6 macro

We find out how the Tamron 16 300mm f/3.5 5.6 Di II VC PZD macro lens, with 18.8x optical zoom range, performs.

AP 14 June

Six of the best

Six of the best bags for compact system cameras are reviewed.

AP 14 June

Sony Alpha 77 II

Superseding the Sony Alpha 77, we find out if the new Alpha 77 II lives up to Sony's claim that it is 'the king of APS C'.

AP 28 June



PINEWOOD
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Photographer READER EVENT

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Monday 9 June 2014 • Pinewood Studios, Bucks

Join us at Pinewood Studios, the home of British film, for a one-day DSLR video tuition seminar with leading film-maker Victoria Grech, in association with Tiffen. The session is essential for amateur photographers wanting to learn the basics of film-making with a DSLR or compact system camera, and will cover everything you need to know to get more out of that red button on your camera.

We will provide you with the technical and practical skills needed to start shooting high-quality video including:

- Setting up your camera for optimum results
- Essential shooting skills
- The importance of good audio
- Understanding the jargon
- Putting your new skills into practice with a live shoot

In addition, you'll get the chance to try a Steadicam, sample video accessories and see the latest EOS DSLRs. Of course, you'll soak up the history and heritage of Pinewood – the home of James Bond and many iconic films, including the new *Star Wars* trilogy which is currently being filmed there. The AP Editor and members of the AP team will also be on hand during the day.

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Canon PowerShot G1 X Mark II

Canon's latest premium compact, the **PowerShot G1 X Mark II**, sets its sights on improving where the PowerShot G1 X left off. We find out whether the new model is a significantly better camera

Michael Topham

Deputy technical editor



REWIND to the year of the millennium and it was the PowerShot G1 that sparked the creation of Canon's G series – a camera out to appeal to photographers who desired more sophisticated control than your average point-and-shoot compact without the cumbersomeness of a heavy DSLR. It came with a 3.3-million-pixel, 1/1.8in CCD sensor and a 3x optical zoom lens that was equivalent to 34-102mm, but the G1 was soon overshadowed by the PowerShot G2, G3 and G5 (there was no G4 model as Japanese firms avoid this number).

Fourteen years down the line, Canon is continuing to develop its range of flagship compact models that have picked up such high acclaim from prosumer photography enthusiasts for more than a decade. Perhaps most interesting has been the manufacturer's decision to continue developing its line of G-series models equipped with relatively small 1/1.7in sensors, while at the same time producing a premium model in the range with a larger 1.5in (18.7x14mm) sensor capable of challenging the level of detail resolved by other premium compacts and CSCs using micro four thirds and APS-C-sized sensors.

The first model in this new direction for Canon was the G1 X. Two years on and we have the G1 X Mark II – a camera that has it all to do if it is to answer some of the concerns that were raised when we reviewed the original G1 X in 2012.

AT A GLANCE

- 12.8-million-pixel CMOS sensor (13.1-million-pixel in 4:3 aspect)
- 5x optical zoom (24-120mm) f/2-3.9
- ISO 100-12,800
- DIGIC 6 image-processing engine
- 3in tilting touchscreen, (1.04 million dots)
- Street price £749

FEATURES

The G1 X had a number of flaws, including a rather hesitant focus system, a limited close-focusing distance for macro photography and an optical viewfinder that was little or no better than the kind we'd been used to seeing on previous G-series models. However, where it did pull out the stops was its sensor, so it's no surprise to find that its successor's 1.5in-type CMOS chip is the same physical size (18.7x14mm), working out at 16% larger than a micro four thirds chip and only 20% smaller than Canon's APS-C-sized sensors.

The size of the G1 X Mark II's sensor places it slap bang between the 1in sensor found in the Sony Cyber-shot RX100 II and the APS-C chip used in Fujifilm's X100S fixed-lens compact. While the 12.8-million-pixel resolution may seem a bit of a comedown from the original G1 X, the new sensor configuration means the pixels on the sensor are larger, allowing for greater light-gathering capabilities and a sensitivity ceiling of ISO 12,800. What's more, by being able to adapt and capture images using the full width of the image circle of the lens,



Without ND filter



With ND filter

regardless of which ratio is being used, a maximum resolution of 13.1 million pixels is achievable when the aspect ratio is switched to 4:3 from its 3:2 (12.8-million-pixel) default setting.

Canon's most advanced DIGIC 6 image processor has also been used to improve performance, produce less image noise and reduce shooting lag by as much as 56%. In addition, Canon has replaced the G1 X's 4x zoom lens (28-112mm) with a 5x zoom optic (24-120mm), making it superior to its predecessor at both ends of the focal length. The larger optic also allows it to be faster and boast an impressive maximum aperture of f/2 that closes to f/3.9 at full

telephoto. Furthermore, the G1 X Mark II addresses the risk of camera shake and blur by implementing Canon's tried and tested Intelligent Image Stabilizer (IS) technology, and any close focusing concerns are put to rest by having the option to focus within 5cm – a significant improvement on the G1 X that can only shoot from 20cm.

Also improved is the AiAF system, which more than triples the G1 X's nine AF points to an altogether more impressive 31 that tie in with the camera's single, continuous, servo AF/AE and touch AF modes. The latter is the giveaway that the G1 X Mark II supports touch functionality via its 3in, 1.04-million-dot display, and users can expect the same

The built-in ND filter allows users to set a shutter speed up to 3 stops slower than would otherwise be possible, which is great for turning flowing water silky smooth

intuitiveness and sensitivity response as that found on Canon's touchscreen DSLRs such as the EOS 100D. Whereas the original G1 X had a vari-angle screen that could be pulled out to the side and rotated, the G1 X Mark II's display is the tilt-angle type. While it can still flip out to aid low-level and high-angle shooting, it doesn't offer quite the same level of manoeuvrability, although it still provides the option to be flipped to shoot self-portraits at arm's length.

The G1 X Mark II looks slimmer than the G1 X due to the absence of a viewfinder. The G1 X Mark II is the first model in the G-series range not to feature a built-in viewfinder, and rather than attempting to improve the G1 X's optical variety, Canon has decided to axe it altogether and give the user the choice of whether or not a viewfinder is a necessity by offering an optional clip-on electronic viewfinder (see *Features in use*, below).

Other features to note include a pop-up flash that's concealed within the top-plate, a built-in 3-stop ND filter that can be used to create longer shutter speeds or wide apertures in bright light, not forgetting full manual control and 14-bit raw support. With Wi-Fi connectivity now expected by today's standards, the G1 X Mark II provides Wi-Fi and NFC to sync images with mobile devices running Canon's CameraWindow app. Alternatively, wireless remote control of the camera can be taken, provided the mobile device that it's paired with remains within a 5m range.

8/10

BUILD AND HANDLING

In an effort to give the camera a premium look and feel, a stainless-steel chassis and aluminium exterior have been used, which makes the G1 X Mark II 24g heavier than the previous model. Pick it up and the

FEATURES IN USE EVF-DC1

VIEWFINDERS on Canon G-series cameras have traditionally been of the optical type, but due to their small size they've often suffered from parallax error, whereby what is framed through the viewfinder is different to what the lens is actually seeing. The field of view has also typically been way below the 100% coverage you'd expect. One example is the original G1 X's optical viewfinder that showed approximately 73% coverage at wideangle and 74% coverage at full telephoto – not an accurate view, but perhaps better than none at all.

The removal of a viewfinder altogether on the G1 X Mark II is a bold move, but one Canon has had the foresight to make in an attempt to keep up with the

competition and the likes of Sony, which offers the EV1MK electronic viewfinder with a resolution of 2.36 million dots for premium compact models such as the RX100 II.

The Canon EVF-DC1 for the G1 X Mark II is designed to attach to the accessory port on the hotshoe. It translates a 100% field of view of what the sensor sees, which is a vast improvement over the optical coverage, and offers the flexibility for it to be tilted up by 90°. The 2.3-million-dot resolution delivers an incredibly sharp image and faithful colour, and as well as complementing the G1 X Mark II's touchscreen it doubles as a way of composing and reviewing images in high-contrast conditions.





Wideangle 24mm

body strikes you as being reasonably sturdy and robust, but it's the new handgrip that transforms the handling. It allows you to curl your fingers around the body to get a more secure hold and it uses the same rubber grip that appears at the rear where the thumb rests beside the screen. Our only gripe about the grip is the way it isn't integral to the design and is bolted to the body, suggesting it was an afterthought. From certain angles, especially from underneath, it has a rather disappointing finish.

The larger lens has two dual-control rings around the barrel, which can be customised to offer independent control of the most commonly used settings in different shooting modes. With the front control ring being as smooth as it is, it wouldn't take much to knock it and accidentally adjust the exposure. It is set up to control exposure compensation when the camera's focusing mode isn't set to manual focus, and we did accidentally knock it a couple of times while out shooting. The rear control ring is easy to operate with the thumb and index finger when the camera

The G1 X Mark II's new lens allows the camera to shoot wider and zoom closer than was previously possible with the original G1 X

The improved focusing distance allows you to focus on subjects as close as 5cm. However, when set to f/2, the camera did create a dreamy and hazy appearance around the point of focus



Telephoto 120mm

is supported in the left hand, but it could do with being a touch smoother. The position of the mode dial is well placed on the corner of the body for control with the thumb and the general layout of buttons will be familiar to those who've used a PowerShot G-series model before. The only criticism regarding button placement concerns the playback and Wi-Fi buttons. The latter sits just above the thumb rest and was accidentally pressed numerous times, while the placement of the playback button on the top-plate doesn't feel like the best place for it. We'd much prefer to see it at the back of the camera, ideally where the MF button is found.

7/10

METERING

When photographing outdoor scenes, the camera has a bias towards ensuring images appear brighter rather than darker, so to preserve detail and prevent clipped highlights in bright areas, such as the sky, I found myself dialling in around -1EV to -2EV at times to compensate. With

evaluative mode selected, metering is tied to the active AF point, and despite there not being a button on the body dedicated to adjusting the metering mode, centreweighted and spot are easy to find from the quick menu that's loaded from the func.set button. The histogram loads at the same time as the rule of thirds grid and virtual horizon indicator, offering a live visual representation of whether the highlights or shadows are at risk of being clipped.

7/10

AUTOFOCUS

When I reviewed the original G1 X, I remember cursing the autofocus system at times as it hunted and hesitated in use. Thankfully, Canon has addressed the issue on the G1 X Mark II by incorporating a new 31-point AiAF system that's accurate and more responsive. However, this can't compete with the same split-second lock-on speeds offered by some of the very latest hybrid AF systems, and the focusing speed is a fraction slower at full telephoto than at its wideangle setting. Focusing in low-light conditions is helped by the bright-white AF-assist beam, but with this switched off I found that it didn't affect the acquisition speed greatly and the performance against low-contrast subjects devoid of detail remained relatively quick. Only in the most extreme low-light conditions did the lens show signs of hunting back and forth before focus was acquired.

The camera's ability to focus within 5cm with its macro mode enabled makes it good for capturing detailed close-ups, but you will need to bear in mind that this is only available when the lens is set to its widest setting. With the aperture opened to f/2, we also noticed that our macro shots had a rather soft and dreamy feel to them. Touch AF functionality, combined with the highly sensitive touchscreen, greatly improves the speed at which the AF target is moved across the frame. Set to continuous AF, focusing between near and far subjects is extremely smooth and doesn't jump as you tap focus – making it possible to achieve fluid focusing transitions when shooting



 HD video. Switched to manual focus, the front control ring provides precise control with a visual gauge displaying focusing distance at the side of the screen. A feature that ties in well with focusing manually is the focus-peaking mode, which displays the point of highest contrast by outlining the relevant area in a choice of red, yellow or blue. Combining the two transforms manual focusing and helps users to achieve sharper results much more easily.

8/10

DYNAMIC RANGE

The dynamic range readout from the sensor is incredibly good, falling only slightly short of the 12EV value we associate with cameras that allow a high level of detail to be preserved from the darkest and lightest areas in an image. This impressive range drops off slightly beyond ISO 400 to a value of 10.19EV, but it remains a respectable result given that it's up there with readouts from cameras with larger APS-C-sized sensors such as the Canon EOS 1200D.

As expected, the dynamic range decreases as the sensitivity is increased and a readout of 6.22EV was attained at the maximum ISO 12,800 setting – fractionally behind the result you could expect from an entry-level DSLR. For those who would like to shoot images with an even wider dynamic range, an HDR mode is also available from the creative modes. We found it rather frustrating, though, having to wait until the task bar disappeared off the screen before the mode could be changed using the lens control ring nearest the body.

9/10

NOISE, RESOLUTION AND SENSITIVITY

The drop in effective pixel resolution hasn't had a detrimental effect in the level of detail the 1.5in-type CMOS sensor can resolve. Shooting in the default 3:2 aspect (12.8 million pixels), the camera can just about resolve 26 lines per millimetre (lpmm), which is the same readout as when we tested the original G1 X. Detail drops off slightly to 24lpmm at ISO 400, but even at ISO 6400 the chip resolves detail to around 20lpmm, which is impressive given its compact status. However, detail drops off considerably at ISO 12,800, so this sensitivity setting should be avoided.

An inspection of high ISO JPEG images revealed the importance of shooting in raw. Although the sharpening applied to JPEGs isn't overly aggressive, shots at higher sensitivities are smoothed out so fine detail is compromised. To test the claimed improved light-gathering capability, we compared JPEGs and raw files of the same scene taken on the original G1 X and the Mark II. Our comparison revealed truth in the claim, with the G1 X Mark II showing

Facts & figures

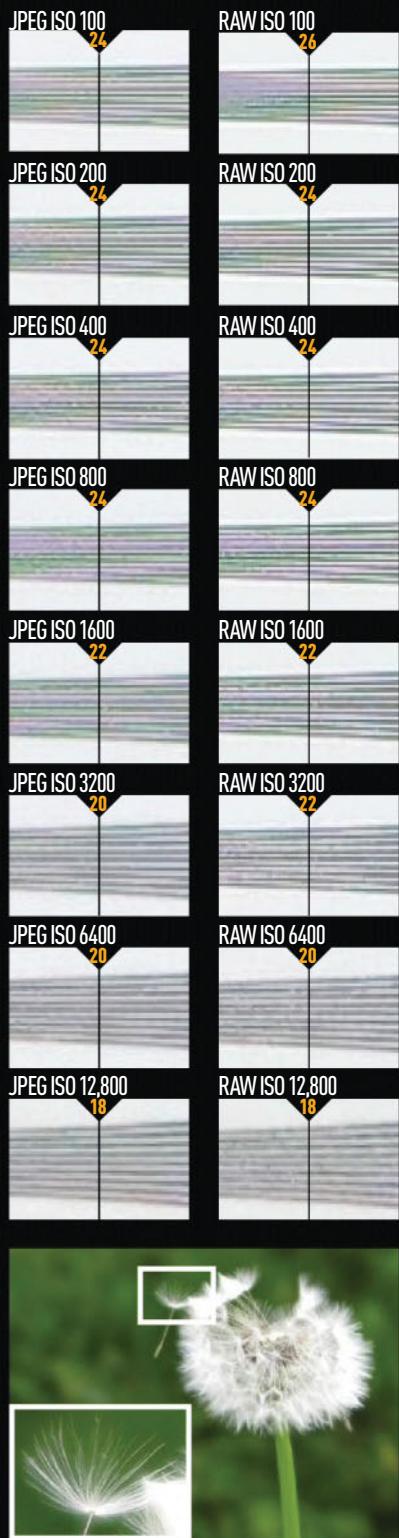


RRP	£749
Sensor	12.8-million-effective-pixel CMOS (18.7 x 14mm)
Output size	4352 x 2904 pixels
File format	JPEG, raw (CR2), JPEG+raw, AVI (motion JPEG)
Compression	2-stage JPEG (Fine, Superfine)
Colour space	sRGB
Shutter type	Mechanical
Shutter speeds	60-1/4000sec
Max flash sync	1/250sec
ISO	100-12,800
Exposure modes	PASM, hybrid auto, auto, creative shot
Metering system	Evaluative, centreweighted average and spot (can be linked to active AF point or face detection) ±3EV
Exposure comp	Auto, 7 presets, 2 custom modes
White balance	5.2fps, or 3fps with AF
Drive mode	3in, 1.04-million-dot touchscreen
LCD	Optional (EVF-DC1 £249)
Viewfinder type	100%
Field of view	Yes
Dioptr adjustment	Single, continuous, servo, touch AF
Focusing modes	31-point system
AF points	No
DoF preview	Yes
Built-in flash	Three levels with internal flash (up to 19 levels with external EX Speedlites 270EX II and 430EX II) 22 levels with 580EX II, 600EX and 600EX-RT)
Flash control	Full HD 1920 x 1080 at 30fps
Video	Not available (no accessory port)
External mic	SD, SDHC, SDXC UHS-I
Memory card	NB-12L rechargeable Li-Ion (240 shots)
Power	Hi-Speed USB, HDMI Micro, Wi-Fi
Connectivity	558g
Weight	116.3 x 74 x 66mm
Dimensions	

Canon, Woodhatch, Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8BF.
Tel: 01737 220 000. Website: www.canon.co.uk.

RESOLUTION & NOISE

These images show 72ppi (100% on a computer screen) sections of images of a resolution chart, captured with the lens set to an equivalent setting of 50mm. We show the section of the resolution chart where the camera starts to fail to reproduce the lines separately. The higher the number visible in these images, the better the camera's detail resolution is at the specified sensitivity setting.



The high level of detail means it's possible to crop tightly into images without concern. This image was originally shot in the portrait format, but still preserves excellent detail when viewed at 100%

FOCAL POINTS

Pop-up flash

The G1 X Mark II's pop-up flash is activated using a small button at the side of the body just below the camera-strap lug. The camera provides three levels of manual flash adjustment, but is also compatible with E-TTL and EX-series Speedlites

Zoom control

The zoom is controlled using the zoom switch located around the shutter button. Switching the camera from stills to video mode slows down the speed at which the zoom operates for smoother zooming transitions

Mode dial

The mode dial is positioned right where you want it – on the corner of the body where it can be easily accessed and controlled with the thumb. It notches positively into place with each turn, meaning it won't be knocked unintentionally



Wi-Fi functionality

The G1 X Mark II paired up with the Canon Camera Window app on our iPhone with no hesitation. Our only gripe with the Wi-Fi is the positioning of the Wi-Fi button, which was accidentally knocked several times in use, thus slowing down the shooting process

Touchscreen

The 3in touchscreen is incredibly responsive and only requires the lightest of touches to navigate the menu or adjust settings. It makes the camera more intuitive to set up, especially when it comes to focusing

Menu

The G1 X Mark II should be complimented for its excellent menu system. Settings are broken down into three categories and for times when you want to access commonly used camera settings, the func.set button should be used

Manual focus peaking



Wind filter



Built-in ND filter



Those faced with challenging lighting conditions may want to use the camera's HDR mode. This helps to produce images with a wider dynamic range – most noticeable in shadow areas



fractionally less luminance noise in JPEG and raw files at ISO 6400 and 12,800 – most obviously in the darkest shadows.

27/30

WHITE BALANCE AND COLOUR

Leaving the G1 X Mark II set to AWB produced an accurate white balance performance, with reliable results recorded both indoors and out. Colours are punchy and are a true reflection of the scene as I remember them. Reds, greens and blues are superbly represented in bright sunlight, and in overcast conditions where there's typically a distinct lack of colour tones images remained neutral and lifelike. Back on the computer, images rarely needed any work with the temperature and saturation sliders, and while there is the option to shoot in black & white and enhance colour in-camera from the creative modes, there are no options to add more contrast or choose from a number of mono-contrast treatments such as infrared.

8/10

VIEWFINDER, LCD AND VIDEO

The touch functionality of the G1 X Mark II makes navigation of the menu a breeze, but the way the screen protrudes from the body, even when it's pushed back, means it's not attractive to look at from the rear. Flipped out, the display feels rather flimsy. When it's tilted by 180° and the camera is held at arm's length, the raised profile of the

hotshoe also obscures the exposure settings at the bottom – which is not ideal when you're attempting to shoot a self-portrait.

More complimentary things can be said about the EVF, which, although not cheap, is an accessory most users will want to consider. There's a reassuring click as the small electronic pins make contact with the accessory port, and just like most EVFs, the same screen information appears in the viewfinder – unless the display button is used to overlay a rule of thirds grid and present the histogram in the top right corner of the display. The near-instant switch from screen to EVF is courtesy of a highly sensitive eye sensor, and although there's a fraction of a second delay when pulling the camera away and returning to the screen, it's not a cause for concern.

The movie-rec button can be used to start high-definition video recording in any manual-shooting mode, with a maximum frame rate of 30fps. Moving subjects are recorded very well and the zoom control in video mode benefits from being purposely slowed down to encourage smoother results. There's the option to shoot movies in mono or with a sepia tone too, and the five-axis enhanced dynamic IS system makes it easy to record judder-free videos when the camera is handheld as opposed to being locked off on a tripod or similar support. Missing a mic port, users are limited to the camera's in-built microphone, but listening to our footage revealed perfectly reasonable audio when the wind filter was set to auto.

7/10

Competition



Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 II

TESTED AP 27 JULY 2013



Fujifilm X100S

TESTED AP 6 APRIL 2013

THE CANON G1 X Mark II's direct rival is the Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 II. The G1 X Mark II offers some key advantages in the way it benefits from a touchscreen and a wideangle lens, plus the larger 1.5in sensor should see it resolve fractionally more detail from its images. However, as well as the RX100 II being able to shoot twice as fast as the G1 X Mark II in continuous mode at up to 10fps, it's around 50% lighter and 40% thinner, making it a true trouser-pocket-sized compact. Added to this, the RX100 II boasts a higher-resolution screen, longer battery life and faster f/1.8 maximum aperture, not to mention the difference in price that stood at £180 cheaper at the time of writing. Fujifilm's X100S is another rival and comes with a larger APS-C-sized sensor. It does have a fixed lens, however, so it won't be as versatile for those feel a zoom is necessary. With a beautiful tactile feel, it currently works out at £120 more expensive than the G1 X Mark II.

Verdict

AT THE beginning of this review I questioned whether the Canon PowerShot G1 X Mark II is a better camera than the G1 X, and I'm glad to report it is. A lot of this comes down to its improved optics, but it's not as revolutionary as one might expect. Battery life is still rather poor at around 240 shots per charge, the screen and handgrip aren't as refined as other parts of the body, and then there's the price. For £749 you get good image quality, but it is overpriced for what it is – made more so by adding the viewfinder, which takes it close to a four-figure sum. This is a price above what many will be happy to pay for a premium compact and it's not a camera I'd strictly associate with the word 'premium' for the way it feels in the hand. Overall, while the G1 X Mark II is an improvement, it is some way off providing the perfect blend of advanced features and premium build quality in a size that fits the pocket and at a price most will be prepared to pay.

**Amateur
Photographer**

Tested as a
Premium compact
Rated Very good

81%

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
FEATURES	8/10									
BUILD/HANDLING	7/10									
NOISE/RESOLUTION	27/30									
DYNAMIC RANGE	9/10									
AWB/COLOUR	8/10									
METERING	7/10									
AUTOFOCUS	8/10									
LCD/VIEWFINDER	7/10									

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Samsung NX mini

Meet the world's smallest and lightest interchangeable-lens camera, the 20.5-million-pixel **Samsung NX mini**

Jon Devo
Technical writer

NO ONE could ever accuse Samsung of failing to innovate; the number of different devices the company releases each year is evidence of that. Yet while some may turn their noses up at the Korean tech giant's previous digital compacts, Android-powered cameras and bridge cameras, the NX mini is an interesting prospect that deserves some attention from enthusiast and beginner photographers alike.

With the NX mini, Samsung joins the Nikon 1-series cameras and Panasonic's Lumix DMC-GM1 in the miniature interchangeable-lens camera category. If size is a deciding factor, these cameras are your main options, although alternatives could include highly rated pocket travel model such as Sony's 20.4-million-pixel Cyber-shot DSC-HX60V and Panasonic's 18-million-pixel Lumix DMC-TZ60, both of which carry a 30x optical zoom that gives the range and flexibility of an interchangeable-lens system.

FEATURES

A 20.5-million-pixel BSI CMOS 1in (13.2x8.8mm) sensor is housed inside the Samsung NX mini's diminutive frame, which is the same-sized sensor used by Sony in its

popular Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 II.

Combined with the supplied wideangle lens and its ability to automatically take a picture once a face is detected (up to a maximum of ten faces) with the Wink or Smile Shot turned on, the camera's 3in flip-up LCD touchscreen is perfect for self-composed portraits. Samsung seems keen to capitalise on the current global 'selfie' trend, and this camera will undoubtedly appeal to the vanity victims of that craze, but it will also be attractive to people who make video diaries or blog posts.

There is a host of wireless-connectivity options with this camera. As well as being able to connect to the internet and share images directly to familiar networks such as Facebook, Picasa, Dropbox and Flickr, it's also possible to link the camera to other smart devices via Wi-Fi or NFC for file transfer, remote viewing and shooting. One of the things I like most about the file-sharing features of the NX mini is that you have the option to choose whether to transfer the original file or a smaller compressed version. Parents will find the option of using the NX mini as a baby monitor an added bonus, as it connects to a smartphone when both are on the same Wi-Fi network.

Samsung has also developed an entirely new NX-M lens mount to accommodate the camera's ultra-compact format, although NX-mount lenses can be used with the optional ED-MA4NXM adapter.

The NX mini's 2,330mAh battery life is

another great feature of this camera, having almost twice the capacity of the battery featured in Samsung's more advanced NX30, and rated to shoot up to 650 shots with the 9mm kit lens before draining completely.

8/10

BUILD AND HANDLING

Available in multiple colours at launch, the magnesium-alloy frame of the NX mini is covered in a leather-look tough plastic, giving it an instantly stylish finish, but the lack of actual leather or even a leatherette-type material prevents a premium feel. Don't be fooled by commentators online or even Samsung's own description of the camera, many of which I've seen describe the body as being 'bound by natural leather-like material'. Only the feeling of cool metal on the NX mini's top-plate reminded me that I was holding an all-metal-bodied camera and not a plastic one.

At 119.4mm wide, 61.9mm tall and 22.5mm thick, and weighing 196g body only, the NX mini is petite indeed, making less of an imprint in your pocket than most current flagship smartphones. It slips into a pocket quite easily, even with the 9mm f/3.5 prime kit lens attached. However, your pocket will need to be a little deeper if you choose to buy it with the 9-27mm f/3.5-5.6 (24.3-72.9mm equivalent) collapsible zoom lens.

The forward-flipping motion of the camera's 460,800-dot (320x480-pixel-resolution) LCD screen is assured and positive, with the graphical display flipping instantly once in position. Some of the button placement is a little frustrating, though: direct link is positioned too close to the power button and movie record is directly under your thumb at all times. I accidentally pressed each of these buttons regularly while testing the NX mini.

7/10



This is a challenging metering scenario. The subject of this image is well exposed, but unfortunately highlights in the bright background were lost in the process

METERING

It's no surprise to discover the same TTL 221-block-segment metering system in the NX mini that has featured in many previous NX cameras. We've rated the system as good in the past and that remains the case; I found metering on the NX mini to be consistent and reliable, with little need to delve into the exposure compensation settings to make corrections. Multi-segment, centreweighted and spot metering modes are available, but I was able to stick with multi-segment metering, which is linked to the autofocus for the majority of situations.

8/10

DYNAMIC RANGE

Given the small sensor housed inside the NX mini, I wasn't expecting to be blown away by its dynamic range but it is still respectable, scoring 10.69EV at ISO 100 in our lab test. One of the most interesting things to note is that the dynamic range performance of the camera is very stable up until ISO 3200, delivering consistent performance where other cameras show a much larger decline as you move through the sensitivity range.

Overly bright skies are easily lost as the camera fights to capture information in darker areas. However, Samsung has included Smart Range+ and HDR modes in the dynamic range section of the menu to help you squeeze a greater amount of detail from highlight and shadow areas, and the results are decent. Smart Range+ intelligently analyses the scene and brings up shadows while preserving highlight detail, whereas HDR mode combines three images captured in quick succession at different exposures settings.

Using the Lightroom software provided, it's possible to adjust the exposure settings to get more out of the raw files.

7/10

Facts & figures



RRP	£400 (with 9mm kit lens)
Sensor	20.5-million-effective-pixel 1in (13.2 x 8.8mm) BSI CMOS sensor
Output size	5472 x 3648 pixels
Focal length mag	2.7x
Lens mount	Samsung NX-M mount
File format	Raw, JPEG, raw+S.Fine, raw + JPEG simultaneously
Compression	2-stage JPEG
Colour space	Adobe RGB, sRGB
Shutter speeds	30-1/1600sec in 1/3EV steps plus bulb
Max flash sync	1/200sec
ISO	160-12,800 (ISO 100, ISO 25,600 available extended)
Exposure modes	Auto, smart, program, aperture priority, shutter priority, manual, Wi-Fi
Metering system	TTL 221 (17 x 13) block segment metering, multi, centreweighted and spot ±3EV in 1/3EV steps
Exposure comp	Auto, 7 presets, Kelvin, plus custom setting
White balance	Single, continuous 6fps, bracket [AE/WB/PW/Depth] burst (5M) 30fps/15fps/10fps, wink/smile shot, timer
Drive mode	Articulated 3in TFT LCD with 460,800-dots
LCD	Manual, single-shot AF, automatic AF, continuous AF, face detection, touch AF
Focusing modes	21 points, or 35 points in close-up mode, auto or manual selection
AF points	Yes
DoF preview	Yes – GN 4.9m @ ISO 160
Built-in flash	1920 x 1080 pixels (30fps only), 640 x 480 pixels, 320 x 240 pixels, MP4 (H.264)
Video	No
External mic	Micro SD, Micro SDHC, Micro SDXC, UHS-I Micro SD
Memory card	Rechargeable Li-Ion B740AE battery, up to 650 shots
Power	Micro USB 2.0 Hi-Speed, HDMI
Connectivity	110.4 x 61.9 x 22.5mm
Dimensions	196g (with battery and card)
Weight	

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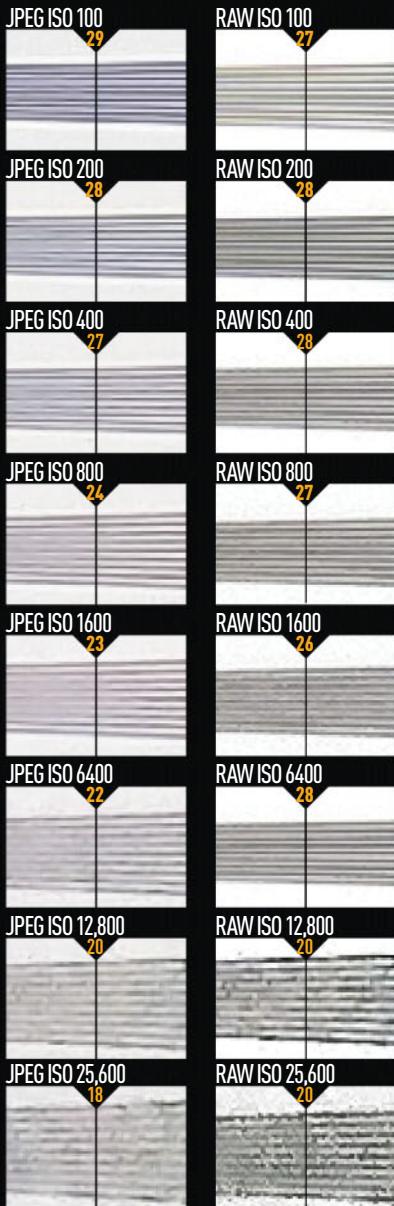
'It's one of the better touchscreen shooting experiences I've had compared to other cameras'

AUTOFOCUS

Unfortunately, the NX mini doesn't feature the on-chip phase-detection autofocus we saw in its slightly bigger brother, the NX300. Instead, it is contrast method only for the mini's 21 AF points in standard mode, or 35 points in close-up mode. In good light the AF performed well, though,

RESOLUTION AND NOISE CONTROL

These images show 72ppi (100% on a computer screen) sections of images of a resolution chart, captured using the Samsung 18mm f/4.5 macro lens. We show the section of the resolution chart where the camera starts to fail to reproduce the lines separately. The higher the number visible in these images, the better the camera's detail resolution at the specified sensitivity setting.



focusing quickly the majority of the time.

However, on a number of occasions the camera would capture entirely blurred frames, particularly when taking self-portraits; for no apparent reason, the camera would acquire focus and then just before taking the shot it would hunt, lose focus and then trigger. I didn't miss any critical images due to this quirk, but it's still a concern.

Tracking and shooting fast-moving subjects is a little better, thanks in part to the ability to track subjects by touching the screen and the camera's super-fast

maximum shutter speed of 1/16,000sec, and raw+JPEG shooting at up to 6 frames per second, so it's possible to freeze fast-moving subjects well, provided you've got good light.

8/10 

NOISE, RESOLUTION AND SENSITIVITY

Keeping up with the competition, the NX mini has a native sensitivity range of ISO 160–12,800, which can be extended to ISO 100–25,600.

In practice, ISO 160–3200 produced pleasing enough results and helped me get a shutter speed fast enough in low light to capture decent shots handheld, although noise is particularly noticeable from ISO 1600. I did attempt to push the sensitivity to ISO 6400, but around that point images become quite smudged and unattractive due to aggressive in-camera noise reduction. Of course, this can be dialled down somewhat and cleaned up using the raw files, but for usable images straight out of the camera I would recommend avoiding using sensitivities towards the NX mini's limits.

The NX mini actually scored slightly higher on our resolution chart than the APS-C-format Samsung Galaxy NX, which was about three times the price of the NX mini when it launched last year. The technology has definitely moved on and I think it's fair to give Samsung credit for achieving this level of performance with a significantly smaller sensor.

26/30 

WHITE BALANCE AND COLOUR

The NX mini has a distinct tendency to lean towards warmer tones when given the opportunity, but in a standard day scene it can reproduce attractive blue skies. The issue I found with this camera's warm tone bias is that whites and greens in particular tend to suffer and appear less vibrant than they should.

Setting the white balance is relatively easy and can be done by pressing the Fn button on the touchscreen to bring up all the available controls. Navigating through the white balance setting, you will find seven options as well as auto, colour temperature and one slot for a custom white balance. Each setting, however, can be tweaked in seven steps along the amber, blue, green and magenta axes.

7/10 

VIEWFINDER, LIVE VIEW, LCD AND VIDEO

The resolution of the NX mini's 3in TFT LCD touchscreen is relatively low at 460,800 dots compared to the 1.037-million-dot LCD on the Nikon 1 J4 and 1.036-million-dot screen of Panasonic's GM1, but it's the only one that can flip up. In use, I found the display a little dark and obviously lacking the sharpness of its competitors, but it's not a deal breaker as you can, of course, connect it wirelessly to another device with a better display for situations where monitoring your images in greater quality is essential.

Being able to tilt the screen 180° is useful for more than just taking self-portraits; it's also great for composing shots lower than eye level without having to crouch, or even from ground level. I utilised this feature a lot, especially when taking pictures of wildlife and plants.

I found the touchscreen responsive and all the settings I wanted to change were quite easy to find and adjust using the touchscreen alone. It's not as fast as having dedicated dials and wheels, but it's one of the better touchscreen shooting experiences I've had compared to other cameras.

Video can be recorded in full HD 1920x1080-pixel resolution, but it is restricted to a frame rate of 30fps, no matter what resolution is selected. It's limiting, but probably not a big concern for people who will be considering this camera.

7/10 



The NX mini has done a good job of capturing the varying colour tones, but in doing so the background highlights in this image have been slightly overexposed



The camera's slight tendency to lean towards red leaves greens lacking the same vibrancy as the warmer tones in images

Verdict

IT'S ALWAYS good to see innovation in the camera world, and Samsung is a manufacturer that is currently willing to try new things, constantly adding to its arsenal. This latest addition provides some worthy competition to the other miniature interchangeable-lens system cameras offered by the Panasonic Lumix DMC-GM1 and Nikon's 1-series models. On paper, the Samsung NX mini offers a decent feature set when compared to its competitors, but I'm now very keen to put the three cameras up against each other to see how they all compare in real-world scenarios.

The NX mini is a very neat package that enabled me to capture decent images without having to carry around any bulky equipment, while the equally mini NX-M lenses (three announced at launch) are defiantly small and well designed.

For day trips, holidays, nights out and family fun, the NX mini will do a good job, and thanks to its attractive looks, it will likely acquire many admirers.

**Amateur
Photographer**
Tested as an
Entry-level CSC
Rated Good
78%

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
FEATURES	8/10									
BUILD/HANDLING	7/10									
NOISE/RESOLUTION	26/30									
DYNAMIC RANGE	7/10									
AWB/COLOUR	7/10									
METERING	8/10									
AUTOFOCUS	8/10									
LCD/VIEWFINDER	7/10									



Interfit EX400 Ti 2-Light Softbox Kit

Andrew Sydenham tests Interfit's most powerful offering from the well-established EX budget range of flash heads

INTERFIT'S wide product range includes continuous lighting, flash modifiers, reflectors and studio flash heads, and since entering the market the company has become well known for its affordable lighting kits. The EX400 Ti 2-Light Softbox Kit is one of the most powerful kits in the Interfit range, and with a suggested retail price of £449 it is one of the most affordable.

BUILD AND HANDLING

At the heart of the Interfit EX400 Ti 2-Light Softbox Kit are two 400 watts per second flash heads. These provide more than enough power for a substantial studio set-up at home or on location, and twice the power of most entry-level offerings. The tough moulded casings have a slightly futuristic style, which on close inspection reveals hidden ventilation gills that aid the efficient cooling of the flash tube, model

bulb and internal electronics. The cooling fan is quite a feature and sits proud of the underside, protected by a chrome grill. It runs continuously and is very quiet, looking rather like one you'd find on your desktop computer.

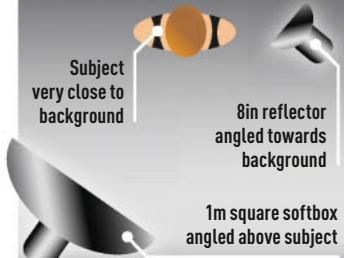
The metal umbrella attachment slot on the EX400 Ti is incorporated in the angle-adjusting clamp. It is far enough away from the flash tube and model bulb to avoid any accidental damage when being attached via the knurled threaded screw that holds the umbrella shaft securely in position. The radio flash trigger casing is rather flimsy compared to the flash heads and wouldn't stand up to rough handling or many accidental drops on the studio floor, so it needs to be treated with care. The 1m² softboxes are quick to assemble, with a handy Velcro release tag making the final pole easy to tighten. This assembly process could be slightly tricky if

IN THE BOX

- 2x EX400 Ti flash heads
- 2x 400W/s flash tubes (SINT490)
- 2x 150W modelling lamps (INT499)
- 2x 8in (20cm) reflectors
- 2x 39in (100cm) softboxes
- 1x Dynamic Ti trigger
- 2x 8.5ft (2.6m) air-cushioned light stands
- 2x Power cables
- 2x Sync cables
- 1x Carry bag

STUDIO PORTRAIT SET-UP

Storm-grey seamless paper background



1/125sec at f/14 with ISO 250 and 85mm lens



The studio set-up for our model test showing the EX400 Ti with a storm-grey background and black polyboards to control reflection

you've never put a softbox together before, but it's no different from the majority of models on the market. I was astonished at the quality of the plasticised material used on the body of the softbox, as it appears to be virtually impossible to tear accidentally, while the specular (mirrored) silver lining is easy to clean. The 4m power cables are standard lengths at this price point, but for most situations they won't be long enough so an extension lead will be necessary.

PERFORMANCE

There is a wide range of reflectors, light shapers and diffusers available to fit the EX400 Ti's EX mount, which accepts anything compatible with Elinchrom accessories. The mount itself is secure, so is unlikely to cause any problems.

I've had a lot of experience with the 150-watt ES light of the type used in these heads, and they are very long lasting and resistant to movement. In fact, I can't remember the last time I changed one and the AP studio is very busy. The head can be mounted onto all standard spigot lighting stands, with an all-metal angle adjusting clamp bolting it onto the main body of the head. Clearly, some thought has been given to this set-up. With the help of the grab handle on the back of the unit, positioning the large softboxes is pretty effortless, and

Our model lit with one EX400 Ti head and softbox, with a second head and standard reflector filling in shadows on the background



once set, they are locked securely in place.

The inclusion of a wireless radio flash trigger is rare at this price point. It allows the photographer to control up to seven separate heads from the camera without going anywhere near the EX400 units.

Modelling-light operation and flash output can be adjusted from the trigger, and each head is assigned an ID number from 1-7 so the dynamic trigger adjusts the features of each head individually. If you assign a head to channel 1 and another head to channel 2, you can adjust each head's power functions individually and fire the head via the dynamic trigger by setting its corresponding channel number on the trigger. When the sync cells on the heads are turned off, they are controlled by radio signal alone, which is great when they are being used in high levels of ambient light or with obstructions between the camera and head. The operating range is 12 metres, which is adequate rather than spectacular.

When I tried out the EX400 Ti, it took



just a short time to set up the lights in a simple but effective formation, and with the custom white balance set to 5600K I got great skin tone and natural colour exactly as required straight from the box. As you can see from the image above, the catchlight in the eyes is very pleasing. I used the softbox without the extra layer of diffusion, and the high-reflectance silver lining has produced

Facts & figures

RRP	£449
Maximum watts/second	400W/s each
Guide number	196ft (60m)
Recycle time @ full power	2secs
Colour temperature	5600K
Flash variability	Full to 1/32 power
Power range	6-stop, stepless
Fitting type	EX
Modelling light wattage	150W (INT499)
Triggering	Built-in 7-channel receiver, sync cable, IR trigger, optical slave
Sync voltage	5V
Operating voltage	110-120V AC
Flash-ready indicator	LED and switchable audible
Fan-cooled	Yes
Auto dump	Yes
Power cable	13ft (4m)
Mounting	Standard 5/8in stand mount
Reflector dimensions	8in (21cm)
Softbox	EX softbox 39in (100cm) INT485
Light stand	8.5ft (2.6m) air cushioned light stands COR751
Weight	5lb (2.28kg)
Dimensions (head)	14.6 x 5.1 x 7.9in (37 x 13 x 20cm)

Below left: The catchlight in the eye has a neat star-cross when the softbox is used without the extra layer of internal diffusion

neat star-cross highlights in the eye that are visible on the surface of the front diffuser.

I would expect the EX400 Ti to last many years with sporadic use. I couldn't identify any particular weaknesses, but it's worth noting that if you do damage the flash tube new ones are readily available. **AP**

Verdict

THE REAL advantage of a purpose-built flash-lighting kit is that everything you need is safely packed away in a custom carry bag, but it can be easily accessed as soon as it is needed – which is certainly the case with the Interfit EX400 Ti 2-Light Softlight Kit. There is more than enough usable lighting power for an advanced amateur or semi-professional photographer in this kit, and the inclusion of a radio trigger with built-in receivers is a real bonus. While the system doesn't have the sophistication or versatility of hi-end systems, the advantages are the lack of sync cables and not having to stretch up to adjust power on the head. This kit provides a lot of lighting for not a vast amount of money, and the value, high build quality and performance are sure to help it find its way onto the shortlist of students and photographers making excursions into the wonderful world of studio lighting.

**Amateur
Photographer**
★★★★★

Improve your photography



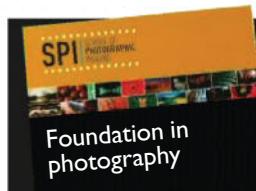
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'The quality of teaching and support that I received was not only motivating, but also extremely detailed and thorough. This enabled me to begin to find who I am as a photographer and without doubt my skills improved considerably' Gill Golding

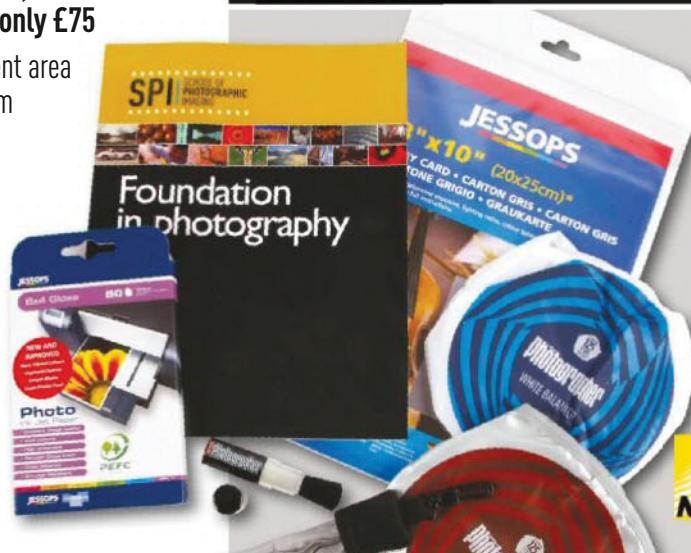


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Gitzo Mountaineer GT1542

Launched back in the 1990s, Gitzo's carbon-fibre Mountaineer range of tripods still have a reputation for excellence. Now they have been given an overhaul, as **Callum McInerney-Riley** explains

DATAFILE

RRP	£604.95
Leg sections	4
Maximum height	159cm
Minimum height	15cm
Closed length	54cm
Weight	1.28kg
Payload	10kg
Leg angles	24°, 55°, 88°



Above: The G-lock Ultra system has been redesigned both internally and externally to make it more durable and smoother in operation



BACK in 1994, Wet Wet Wet dominated the charts with *Love Is All Around*, Tom Hanks starred in *Forrest Gump* and, more notably for photographers, Gitzo brought us the first ever carbon-fibre tripod – the Mountaineer. Now, 20 years on, the company has brought out a third-generation range of Mountaineer tripods.

FEATURES

There are 13 tripods in the new Mountaineer range, which is divided into four series ranging from the small and lightweight series '0' to the largest '3'. Each has a ball head that is designed to match up with the tripod, which is balanced in size and weight for individual series. The tripod on test here is the GT1542 from series 1.

The latest Mountaineer tripod range uses new Carbon eXact technology with HM (High Modulus) carbon fibre. This material is incredibly strong and rigid, but too brittle to be used by itself. For this reason, it is woven together with standard carbon fibre to maximise its advantageous properties. Gitzo engineers spent 18 months calculating the precise ratio needed for both forms of carbon fibre. This ratio is tailored for each individual tripod leg, depending on its diameter, with the smaller legs using the highest amount of HM carbon fibre. The result is increased rigidity, strength and stability, and an improved ability to deal with stress and weight.

Gitzo states that the rigidity of the new Mountaineer tripods has been improved by around 30%, thanks to the use of Carbon eXact and its new G-lock Ultra system. G-lock Ultra is a twist locking system that keeps the legs in place, and it has been redesigned so it is more secure,

smoother to operate and better sealed to prevent ingress of dust and debris.

One of my favourite features of the new Mountaineer range is the ground-level adapter. Previously, removing the centre column meant a complex procedure involving detaching the head from the tripod. However, the adapter allows users to unscrew a locking ring located under the upper disc so the centre column can be pulled out. This allows users to drop the tripod to low angles quickly and easily.

It is reassuring to see that in addition to these big improvements, Gitzo hasn't overlooked the smaller details. The part where the three legs meet and the column goes down (known as the 'spider') has been reshaped and redesigned. Gitzo claims the new shape has better torsion, so it is less likely to twist than the older version. Also, the design of the leg angle selectors has been overhauled so they are significantly bigger.

PERFORMANCE

When using the Mountaineer GT1542 with the 1-series ball head, I found it supported a Canon EOS-1D X and 24-70mm lens perfectly. Even when shooting long-exposure time-lapse images in wind and rain, the camera didn't budge. On hard ground, it's worth using the hook on the centre column and adding some weight to increase stability. The feet on the GT1542 are not detachable, but on the series 2 and 3 tripods the feet can be swapped for spikes or flat feet, which are sold separately.

Another benefit of the redesign is that while the leg-angle selectors of the older models were small and fiddly, particularly in cold weather and when using gloves, the new versions have a lip on their sides and adjust much more quickly. **AP**

Verdict

GITZO'S Mountaineer tripods are built from good-quality materials to cope with demanding conditions. As all the castings are made from magnesium alloy, the GT1542 is reasonably heavy so there's a trade off here between build quality and weight. However, with prices ranging

from £479.95 to £794.95, anybody who buys a Mountaineer tripod will rightfully expect it to last a long time. Therefore, photographers who rely on a tripod will need to weigh up whether the needs of their work justify the price. If the answer is yes, this range of tripods offers a fantastic balance between size, weight and portability. Most important of all, it's rock steady.



Ask AP

Let the AP team answer your photographic queries

LOW-LIGHT OPTION

Q I have a Canon EOS 50D and overall I'm overall very happy with it. However, I was recently trying some low-light photos and was disappointed with the high level of noise, even at ISO 400 (I'm shooting raw and using Adobe Camera Raw for processing). As I have mainly EF-S lenses (17-55mm f/2.8, 18-200mm and 60mm f/2.8 macro), I was looking at either the EOS 7D or EOS 70D, but should I consider full frame with an EOS 5D or EOS 6D? Are these cameras really so much better at higher ISO settings?

Shlomo Spira

A In a word, 'yes'. Although noise is continually being combated to make ever-higher ISO settings possible (so the EOS 7D and 70D improve on the EOS 50D), larger photosites on a sensor result in a better signal-to-noise ratio, which means less noisy pictures. So, full frame will almost certainly be the better option for low-light photography (at least when cameras of a similar vintage are compared).

Of the two full-frame cameras you've listed, the 20-million-pixel EOS 6D would be my recommendation, because it offers outstanding low-light performance at a lower price than the EOS 5D Mark III. You could argue that the EOS 5D Mark III is 'better' in some regards, but if shooting in low-light conditions is your main concern, I suggest going for the cheaper body and putting the price difference towards some new lenses, as your EF-S lenses will no longer be compatible.



Indeed, if you're talking about changing your camera body *and* lenses, then another question arises: should you stick with Canon or look elsewhere? There isn't space here to cover all the options, but Nikon's 24.3-million-pixel D610 is a close match in terms of performance and price, while Sony's Alpha 7 boasts a similar 24.3-million-pixel full-frame sensor, but in a slightly less costly, mirrorless body. **Chris Gatcum**

BLURRY SHOTS

Q I use an Olympus E-410 with 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 and 40-150mm f/4-5.6 lenses. My photos are fine in natural daylight, but when the evening comes or I go indoors all the shots are blurry. Is the problem caused by my lack of experience, or should I get a better camera?

A. Kiter

A Although you haven't provided any information about your images, I'd have to say that this is probably *not* the camera's fault. There are many reasons why a camera might produce 'blurred' shots, including lens or camera-based faults, but I think we can rule out equipment failure if

it isn't happening during the day. Indeed, as it's only happening in the evening or when you're indoors (when light levels are low), camera shake would be my prime suspect, especially as the E-410 doesn't have any form of image stabilisation.

The rule of thumb with non-stabilised camera is to use a shutter speed that's at least the reciprocal of the focal length *equivalent* that you're using, so no slower than 1/50sec with a 50mm focal length equivalent, 1/100sec with a 100mm focal length equivalent, and so on. However, it's important to understand that this is the *equivalent* focal length, after the camera's crop factor (or focal-length magnification) has been taken into account. For example,



ASK...

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if you're using a 40mm focal-length setting on your lens, that's an 80mm focal length equivalent once the 2x crop factor for the four thirds sensor has been taken into account. That means you want to be using a shutter speed of at least 1/80sec – any slower and the risk of camera shake (and blurred images) increases. Obviously, this doesn't guarantee success (some people are naturally 'shakier' than others), but it is a surprisingly accurate measure in most cases.

I suggest you check the Exif information of your blurred shots to see what shutter speeds were being used (the Exif data can be viewed in most image-editing programs). If the shutter speed appears much slower than the effective focal length, I would say you've found the problem. The solution would be to use a wider aperture setting to let more light in and/or increase the ISO sensitivity so you can shoot with a faster shutter speed. Alternatively, you might want to consider using a tripod.

Chris Gatcum

DARK SIDE OF BATTERIES

Q As a back up, I bought a cheap battery online (from a reputable battery supplier) for my Nikon Coolpix P7700 camera. The battery didn't last long after recharging and in less than a year it would only take a 10min charge, allowing me to take just 24 photos! As it had a two-year guarantee I arranged to return it to the supplier, but my local Post Office, learning it was a lithium battery, refused to allow it to be posted. I was given a leaflet entitled *Prohibited and Restricted Items* dated July 2013 that states: 'Batteries, specifically new and used lithium batteries, when not sent with or connected to an electronic device are *not* allowed in the mail' and that 'failure to comply with these controls could result in prosecution'. Apart from the problem for suppliers and purchasers, where does that leave us with the idea that we should remove batteries from our camera for air travel?

Keith Adams

A I agree that it's a confusing state of affairs, Keith, but it's one that's become increasingly necessary given the dangers associated with lithium-ion batteries. As I'm writing this, there are reports that the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 was carrying 200kg of 'consumer' lithium-ion batteries (the type found in laptops, phones and

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AP GLOSSARY

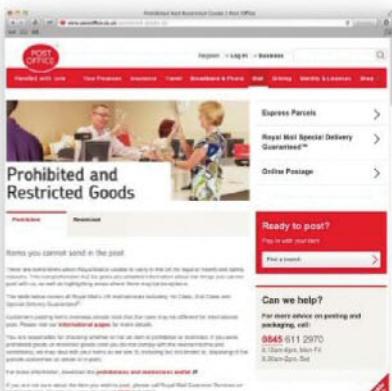
High-sensitivity noise

Although we've seen incredible leaps in the low-light capabilities of digital cameras in recent years (with eye-wateringly high ISO settings that were undreamed of with film), there will always be a point at which noise appears in the image. The reason for this is because the ISO setting on a camera acts like a 'amplifier' for the light recorded by the sensor (it doesn't, as is often wrongly stated, change the sensitivity of the sensor). Just as cranking up the volume on an old radio or cassette player will increase background hiss (audio noise) as well as your favourite tunes, increasing the ISO on a digital camera also amplifies any non-image-forming elements, which are seen as 'noise'.

Noise reveals itself in two forms: as luminance noise and as chroma noise.

Luminance noise is usually the least objectionable of the two, as it is seen as a colourless base texture, which is often described as having slight 'film grain' qualities to it. However, chroma noise is far less pleasant: this is the 'coloured speckle' effect that becomes noticeable in mid-to-dark areas, and is far harder to remove.

In both instances, noise reduction can help reduce the appearance of noise, but this can result in lost detail or an increased 'plasticity' to your images when applied too heavily. For this reason, it is better to attempt any noise reduction using image-editing software or dedicated noise-reduction programs – where you can fine-tune and undo the processing – rather than tackling it in-camera.



cameras), and these have been added to the list of potential causes for the plane's disappearance.

According to Safe Travel (safetravel.dot.gov/quick_chart.html) and other travel websites, 'loose' lithium-ion batteries – those that are not in a camera or other device – can only be taken in your carry-on luggage, while batteries that are in electronic items can go in either your carry-on or checked-in luggage (although some airlines prefer they are taken in your hand luggage). The reason for this is simple: a battery igniting in an overhead locker, or under a seat in the cabin, is going to be noticed more quickly than if it were in the cargo hold. It might be more alarming for the passengers if there is a fire, but having these batteries in the most accessible place possible means that the airlines are hoping that any problems can be swiftly dealt with.

On the other hand, the postal service – which includes other carriers, not just Royal Mail – are refusing to ship lithium batteries unless they are in a camera or

other device. Again, this makes a lot of sense from a safety perspective: while they're in transit, most packages remain relatively anonymous and are treated in the same way. Consequently, a lone lithium battery overheating in a padded envelope in the back of a lorry or in the hold of a cargo plane is possibly not going to be noticed until the situation is quite serious.

So, while these rules may seem slightly contradictory, they have been employed for good reason: as much as we appreciate and benefit from the advantages of lithium-ion technology, it has a definite dark side that we need to be aware of.

Chris Gatcum

PC EXPLANATION

A Many thanks for your reply and explanation in the 26 April issue of Ask AP about the term 'PC socket'. I remember the Prontor and Compr shutters with pleasure, as the first camera I ever purchased for myself was a Braun Paxette with a Prontor SVS-L (light value) shutter. So the PC makes sense – I was trying to associate this with some form of computer plug. I just used to call this a flash sync socket, since – as you say – it is the type on all my cameras. I would still describe it as a miniature co-axial system, rather like a miniature TV aerial plug/socket.

However, my Yongnuo CTR-301P has a socket that is marked 'PC', but it takes a small jack plug (there is no facility to plug in the co-axial type). A lead is included, but this has a mini jack on one end and a 1/4in large jack at the other. Fortunately, I have managed to obtain a lead with a mini jack on one end and a co-axial socket on the other.

Keith Jones



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Grays of Westminster	18-19, 86	Park Cameras Ltd	69-71, Cover: iii
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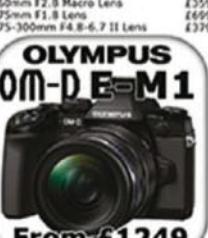


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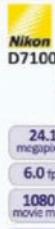
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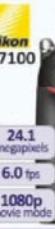
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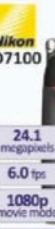
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9	EOS 5D Mark II Body.....£989
9	EOS 60D Body.....£395
9	EOS 1100D Body.....£161
9	EOS 550D Body.....£224
MO	EOS 70D Body.....£799
9-	EOS 7D Body.....£580
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9	EF 14mm f2.8 L II USM.....£1439
9	EF-S 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 IS USM.....£360
10	EF 180mm f3.5 L USM Macro.....£899
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10	EF 24-70mm f4 L IS USM.....£849
9	EF 70-200mm f2.8 L IS USM.....£1079
10	EF 70-300mm f4.5-5.6 IS USM.....£949
9	EF 70-300mm f4.5-5.6 DO IS USM.....£791
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9	EF-S 60mm f2.8 USM Macro.....£215
9	EF-S 18-200mm f3.5-5.6 IS.....£251

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9+	Pentax K-30 Black Body.....£301
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OB	Pentax K-50 + 18-135mm WR DA Lens - Black.....£599
9	Pentax K-7 Body.....£267
9	Pentax K-m Digital SLR Body.....£131
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OB	Sigma SD15 Body.....£565
9-	Sony A100 Body.....£65
9	Sony Alpha A300 Body.....£129

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R	Gitzo GK1581OT Series 1 Ocean Traveller Tripod.....£599.99
R	Gitzo GK2520FT Series 2 Safari Tripod Kit.....£499.99
R	Gitzo GK2580TR Series 2 Traveller Tripod Kit.....£489.99
R	Gitzo GM2341 Series 2 Aluminium Monopod.....£79.99
R	Gitzo GT1531 Series 1 Mountaineer Tripod.....£319.99
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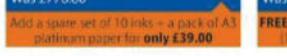
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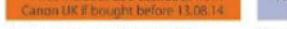
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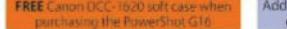


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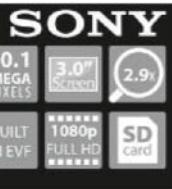
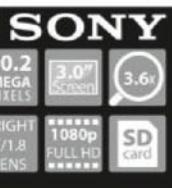
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120 Winder E.....£149	70-300 F4/5.6 IS U.....£59	100 leather case.....£39	100 F1.8 AF G.....£15	100 F1.8 AF G.....£149	100 F1.8 AF G.....£149	300 F4 Macro AIS.....£299	300 F4 Macro AIS.....£299
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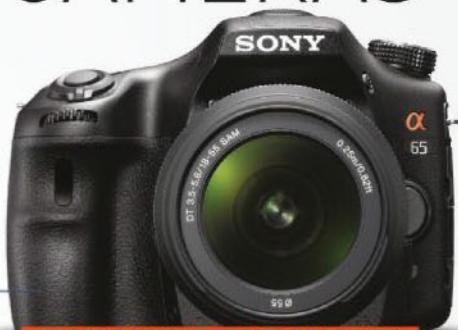
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250mm F5.6 E.....	As Seen / E++/E79-£159	Sigma 55-200mm F4.5-6.3 DC.....	E++/E389	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	Mint-£369	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
250mm F5.6 PE.....	E++/E149	Sigma 70-200mm F2.8 EX DG HSM.....	E++/E239	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	Mint-£369	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Polaroid Mag E.....	E++/E159	Sigma 70-210mm F4.5-6.3 Apo.....	E++/Used £179-£249	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Extension Tube E14.....	E++/Used 139-£199	Sigma 70-300mm F4.5-6.3 Apo Macro.....	E++/E69-£109	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Extension Tube F28.....	E++/E389	Sigma 75-300mm F4.5-6.3 Apo Macro.....	E++/E69	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Extension Tube E42.....	E++/E389	Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM.....	Mint-£499	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Motorwinder E.....	E++/E75-£85	Sigma 100-300mm F4 Apo EX HSM.....	E++/E399	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Motorwinder EI.....	E++/E75	Sigma 105mm F2.8 EX DG Macro.....	E++/E219	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
SCA386 Flash Adapter.....	E++/E20-£45	Sigma 120-400mm F4.5-6.3 Apo DG OS HSM.....	E++/E469	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
AEI Meter Prism.....	E++/E59-£79	Sigma 135-400mm F4.5-6.3 Apo Macro.....	E++/E249	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Prism Finder E.....	As Seen / E++/E35-£79	Sigma 150-500mm F5.6-3.5 APO DG OS HSM.....	E++/E589	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Speed Grip E.....	E++/E19	Sigma 170-500mm F5.6-3.5 Apo.....	As Seen / E++/E198-£228	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E79	50mm F1.4 DG Summilux.....	E++/E399	21mm F2.8 M Black 6bit.....	E++/Mint-£139-£169	E+£1,699	
Bronica SQ/Ai/BI	Sigma 180mm F3.5 EX Macro APO E.....	Mint-£549-£589	Ricoh GR Digital Limited Edition.....	Mint-£129	Ricoh GR Digital Limited Edition.....	Mint-£129	Ricoh GR Digital Limited Edition.....	Mint-£129	Ricoh GR Digital Limited Edition.....	E+£349	
SQAM Complete.....	E++/E299	Sigma 20mm F1.8 Macro APO.....	Mint-£549-£589	Ricoh GR10.....	Mint-£129	Ricoh GR10.....	Mint-£129	Ricoh GR10.....	E+£349		
SQAM Body + Speed Grip.....	E++/E149	Sigma 30mm F2.8 Apo.....	Unused £39	Ricoh GR100.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GR100.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GR100.....	E+£349		
SQAM Body Only.....	E++/E149	Sigma 60mm F2.8 Macro APO.....	Unused £39	Ricoh GR200.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GR200.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GR200.....	E+£349		
65mm F2.8 E.....	E++/E99	Tamron 17-50mm F2.8 XR DI II.....	Mint-£179	Ricoh GRX + 28-300mm.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28-300mm.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28-300mm.....	E+£349		
75-150mm F4.5-6.3 PS.....	Unused £249	Tamron 18-70mm F3.5-6.3 VC.....	E++/E239	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
100-280mm F4.5-6.3 PS.....	E++/E399	Tamron 20-28mm F2.8 XR DI AF.....	E++/E229	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
140-280mm F5.6 PS.....	E++/E399	Tamron 60-200mm F4.5-6.3 VC USD.....	E++/E199	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
200mm F4.5-6.3 PS.....	E++/E129	Tamron 90mm F2.8 Macro APO.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
200mm F4.5-6.3 S.....	E++/E129	Tamron 180mm F3.5 Macro APO.....	E++/E489	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
SQ/Ai Body Only.....	E++/E299	Tamron 200-400mm F5.6 AF Macro APO.....	E++/E489	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
AE Prism Finder S.....	E++/E149	Tamron 200-400mm F5.6-3.5 Di AF Macro APO.....	E++/E489	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
CDS MF Finder S.....	E++/E149	Tokina 12-24mm F4 AF PRO DX ATX.....	Mint-£349	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Prism Finder S.....	As Seen / E++/E35-£79	Tokina 16-28mm F2.8 ATX FZ.....	E++/E589	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Proshade S.....	E++/E25	Tokina 16-50mm F2.8 ATX PRO D.....	E++/E389	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E249	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Canon EOS	Tokina 28-80mm F2.8 ATX Pro.....	Unused £279	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349	
Tokina 30mm F200mm F2.8 ATX SD.....	As Seen £79	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Zeiss 28mm F2.8 E.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Zeiss 35mm F2.8 E.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Zeiss 50mm F2.8 E.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Zeiss 55mm F2.8 E.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Zeiss 85mm F2.8 E.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
Zeiss 100mm F2.8 E.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
14x EF Extender.....	E++/E139-£149	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
14x EF Extender.....	E++/E189	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / E++/E129-£149	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E+£349		
2x EF Extender.....	Exc / Mint-£549-£749	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E++/E129	Ricoh GRX + 28mm F2.5.....	E						



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Swab

A range of swabs are available, use them to apply our cleaning liquids. There are swabs in all sizes from micro 4/3rds through full frame to medium format. Our orange swabs are recommended and safe to use for cameras without an anti aliasing filter. There are also swabs available for specialist uses. These include corner swabs, digital back swabs and focusing screen swabs. All are designed to make this delicate task as easy as possible.

View



Quasar and Mini Quasar loupes make the job of identifying dust and grease on your sensor as safe and easy as possible

Swablight is the latest innovation in the sensor cleaning range. This small and compact light can be focused to clearly show where dust is lurking, and a swab can be fitted directly to the unit so precise cleaning can be carried out. So portable it should go everywhere with you!

Dust

For removing dust and similar debris, our Arctic Butterfly range of brushes are a proven success. They are available in sizes to suit all sensors.

Zeeion blowers are ideal for removing dust from inside shutter chambers.



Flexodome. Use your Zeeion blower with complete confidence. Allows you to position the blower to reach those 'hard to clear' areas in your digital SLR.

Clean

VisibleDust liquid cleaners (Sensor Clean, Smear Away and VDust Plus) are safe to use on all current camera sensors. It is recommended that VDust Plus is only used with our Orange series of swabs.

Sensor Clean is for light stains, whilst Smear Away is for more stubborn stains caused by oil and lubricants, our Green swabs are best for use with these liquid cleaners.



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SATURDAY 31ST MAY

10AM - 6PM



Matt Hart

Having completed his year long project "A YEAR OF BLACK AND WHITE", Matt will be giving a seminar on what led him to take on this ambitious project, how it went and what he learnt from it.

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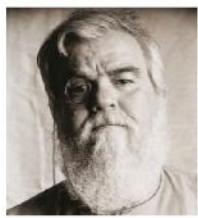
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ROGER HICKS

Time is the basis of all value – we should appreciate it as such and spend it wisely, whether in photography or in life

THOSE who say that time is money could hardly be more wrong. Time is value. In fact, it is the only thing that creates value. Anyone who pretends that money and value are the same thing is stupid, or dishonest, or both.

Think of the things that are most valuable or precious to you. Think of a beautiful day with perfect light, in a place so beautiful that it seems almost impossible not to take a perfect picture. For devotees of traditional photography, think of an hour or two stolen to spend in the darkroom; 'stolen' because you 'should' have been mowing the lawn or doing the ironing. For those who prefer digital, well, think of reviewing your pictures, cropping, colour balancing to reflect your mood, whatever: the sort of thing we see just about every week in the *Appraisal* column right here in AP. Remember: these are times, not objects. We are doing things; we are alive.

Think too of pain and discomfort. They will pass. Knowing that they are limited in time – even in the extreme case, where the only release is death – is what makes them bearable. Their value is negative, the exact opposite of the positive value of a beautiful day, or for that matter of a few minutes' extra time in bed, especially if there's a cuddle involved. In all cases, though, value (happiness/unhappiness) is bounded by time. Money isn't. You can die and leave a fortune. You can't die and leave anyone your own happiness or misery.

If you doubt me, reflect upon the nature of heaven and eternity. In heaven, we are assured, there is no pain, no suffering; there is only eternal bliss. But hold on. No pain? No suffering? Everything is always wonderful? You can saw your own leg off, to see what it feels like, and it feels wonderful, because 'wonderful' is all that is on the menu? For that matter, I have long had a problem with the idea of seeing my mother again in heaven. How old would we be, for a start? Go from the particular to the general, and it's more confusing still. Heaven must be so different from anything we can imagine that it can only make sense as the clear white light of reality: the

'Eternity is even more of a problem. We literally cannot imagine it. The best we can do is "more time"'

cessation of duality, when we become one with the one and all.

Eternity is even more of a problem. We literally cannot imagine it. The best we can do is 'more time'. What would we not do if we had more time? 'And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.' All right, 969 years is a long time, but it ain't eternity.

In fact, we can't really imagine all the days of our own lives. When I was younger and had a mortgage to pay off, I always imagined that when I was older and had more time, I'd spend a good deal of it taking pictures with my 5x7in/13x18cm cameras. Well, I am semi-retired, I have got more time, and if anything, I spend less time on large-format photography than I did 20 years ago. Nor have my digital Leicas taken up all the slack. A lot of my time goes on reading, especially at the more radical end of politics and economics. And, of course, on writing.

And so, as I grow older, I become more and more of an Epicurean. Peace of mind was, to Epicurus, the greatest good.

This is not the same as hedonism, the pursuit of pleasure at any cost: my own peace of mind cannot decently be purchased at the expense of others' peace of mind. We should all, therefore, be careful. Few of us change the world very much, and of the few who do, even fewer change it for the better: history contains far too many warriors, religious zealots, builders of unhappy empires. As Voltaire said in *Candide*: *...il faut cultiver notre jardin*: we need to cultivate our own garden, to manage our own affairs.

We can try to make (and also to leave) the world a better place, as I think Voltaire did. But leaving it a better place for other people is a somewhat quixotic undertaking if we do not at the same time try to make it a better place for ourselves. Given that we do not live on this earth for ever, we must therefore take (or find) and appreciate time as the basis of all value. By extension we should mock, ridicule and ideally beat senseless those narrow-minded businessmen, pandering economists and petty accountants who equate it with money. **AP**

Roger Hicks is a much published author on photography. He has written more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz. He has been a freelance photographer/writer since 1981, contributing to many magazines. Visit his website at www.rogerandfrances.com

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